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TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCESS LOUISE

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

WHO GAVE THE SUMMIT OF GRANGE FELL IN

MEMORY OF HER BROTHER, THE LATE KING EDWARD VII.

AND BY HER PUBLIC SPIRIT WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN

HELPING GREAT BRITAIN TO OBTAIN THE MOST

BEAUTIFUL PART OF BORROWDALE FOR

THE ENJOYMENT OF THE PEOPLE

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PREFATORY NOTE

It will be seen that many of the walks herein described were taken in the Spring of the year. This has been done with a purpose. I have long felt that the outside public do not realise the extreme beauty of the colouring of the Lake District at this season.

I am greatly indebted to Miss Stella Hamilton for the use of her illustration to Irton Fell Chapel; to Mr. W. E. Collingwood for his Irton Cross drawing; to Mrs. Collingwood for the loan of the pencil sketch of her grandfather, William Green; and to Mrs. Heppell for her clever reproduction of the same. But for her painstaking work, it would have been impossible to reproduce the original sketch by the painter—which had become indistinct through age.

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THE Publishers have to thank Mr. Herbert Bell, Ambleside, for permission to reproduce the first and fourth illustrations; Messrs. Walmsley Brothers, Ambleside, for the second and third illustrations, and Mr. Alfred Pettitt for the eighth illustration.

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PAST AND PRESENT IN THE KESWICK VALE.

Those of us who will take a stand upon Castle Head to survey the Keswick vale are on very ancient ground, for it is believed that this Castle Head was the stopper of an old volcano which, in comparatively late geological days, helped to give us the beauty of the hills of Borrowdale and the Lake District to the south. That beauty of broken and bossy mountain outline is owed to the fact that the ashes from the volcano were commingled with lava flow, and hence the storms of centuries have weathered rocks which were not homogeneous or of the same density.

But as we gaze towards Skiddaw, we are looking upon a much older world, the world of the Skiddaw slates, which are some of the oldest series in England, and were certainly piled up long before the Alps were dreamed of. Geologists are divided as to how the Skiddaw series of slates or

sedimentary rocks came into being. Both, however, are agreed that they belong to the first series of the Ordovician order which overlie the Cambrian. But they differ as to the probable conditions on which this great mass of Skiddaw slate was laid down.

It is believed by some that wherever the detritus of the old world came from, out of which the 12,000 feet of Skiddaw is made, it was formed at the bottom of a very deep semi-tropical sea. The argument adduced for this is that in certain rocks in the North of Scotland of a limestone order, whilst the flinty remains of Radiolaria have been discovered, no shells of the tiny microscopic Foraminifera are found to exist. It is argued that the absence of these Foraminifera is to be accounted for only by the fact that the shells being of calcium, were entirely dissolved as they were falling downward through a very deep sea.

On the other hand, there are geologists who assert that it is more than probable that Skiddaw slate was laid down in a very shallow sea, and was the result of a vast river rolling its tides of alluvium to our Cumberland shores from some continent now submerged, situate in the sea to the north-west, of which old world only one solitary pillar rock somewhere off the north of the Orkneys

remains to-day. These geologists point to the remains of the graptolite shells in the Skiddaw slate, the horny coverings of which alone remain to us to-day, and assert that they were not deep water shells.

These graptolites are very interesting shells. They disappeared entirely for vast geological eras, but they are now found to abound in a modified form. One of the most plausible arguments in support of the theory that these graptolites were not deep water shells, and that therefore Skiddaw was laid down in shallow water, is the fact that Sertularian zoophites, the living representatives of the ancient graptolites, live in shallow water to-day. The Solway Firth is, I am informed by my friend, Mr. John Postlethwaite, who is an expert in the history of the graptolite, swarming with them ; he has found them at Seascale and St. Bees, and in a floating mass of seaweed in Whitehaven harbour. These graptolites are proof to us that the Skiddaw series of slate extended southward far beyond the Cumberland we know, for the lower portion of the Arenig formation in Wales yields graptolites similar to those found in the Skiddaw area.

However Skiddaw came to be laid down, it is quite certain that it took an immeasurable number

of years to build. Geologists speak of six millions of years as possible for its growth, and think this new world began to be evolved from an older continent more than sixty millions of years ago. It is also quite certain that it was gradually upheaved out of the water, and that millions of years may have intervened before, by some sudden buckling of the earth perhaps and great upheaval of its strata, the volcanoes that gave birth to the Lake District south of Skiddaw came into activity.

Geologists tell us that at this volcanic time, the first of three volcanic eras in the Lake District, the Scafell and Helvellyn ranges being thrown up on the top of the Skiddaw slates, would be towering up high above Skiddaw. How comes it then to-day that Skiddaw and Scafell are so nearly of an height? It is believed that this can only be accounted for by the fact that at some era, owing possibly to volcanic activities and the cooling of the earth's crust at the same time, some great disturbance took place which caused the huge crack or fracture or fault, extending from Egremont across Derwentwater, through the Vale of St. John's, away to Mell Fell, and that at this time owing to the uptilting of the Skiddaw series, the whole of the Lake District to the south slid down the Skiddaw mass at this fracture.

People who are interested in geology, if they walk up the small ghyll that descends from Castlerigg Fell to Causeway foot, may actually see the ashes of the later geological era, which gave us the Lake District to the south, overlying the Skiddaw slate at the fault. At Castle Head in the quiet sunshine to-day, we can hardly imagine the stormy cataclysms that gave birth to this serene landscape.

But it is not only fire that has been at work in this Keswick vale. The very mound upon which Crosthwaite Church stands is a moraine mound, and the ice plow of a glacier age as it passed downward towards the south has written its characters plainly on the rocks, not only in Borrowdale, but in the Vale of St. John's.

And who were the people who lived hereabouts in the days that followed the glacier age? They were Brigantes or Brigands of a Neolithic time, who, from at least 3,000 B.C., made their stone axes in the valley from the fine chert which they got from Scafell. They tamed the wild goat and the long-fronted ox, and lived for the most part on the tops of the hills, in order to avoid the beasts of prey and enemies in the forest below them. They shepherded their goats without the help of dogs, for the dog had not yet been tamed;

they grew corn which they ground in stone querns, and, knowing nothing of iron or bronze, worked with wooden hoes and horn rakes, and when they died buried their dead in long barrows.

Anyone who visits the museum at the Fitz Park will find exquisite specimens of the stone axe and hammer, with the querns or handmills which these people used. We, who are only just beginning to return to stone-ground flour, know less than these men did of wherein consisted the staff of life. What masters they were of the art of stone cutting and polishing we know, and how laboriously they worked with sand and wood to bore the holes for the haft in their stone hammers. Some poor fellow who dwelt on the island of Derwentwater, died before he had bored right through his stone hammer. Sometimes when a man after great effort had worked to pierce through the solid granite of his quern or corn-grinder from both sides of the upper stone, he would find that the two borings did not correspond, and that all his labour was lost. A few years ago, a quern was discovered on Vicarage Hill, which had been broken and thrown into the fosse of the stockade camp by the man who had spent all his labour in vain, and had failed to pierce it, and apparently had in his vexation of spirit broken it in two as useless.

Perhaps a thousand years ago B.C. there appeared in the valley another race, men of larger stature with fair hair and blue eyes and round heads, who had spears in their hands, and when they went to cut down the forest trees, laughed to scorn the stone axe of the original inhabitants, for they knew the use of iron and bronze, and wore upon their arms, and perhaps upon their necks, twisted ornaments of bronze, and sometimes round their necks torques of gold. You will see two of these armlets, worn by a woman probably, in the Fitz Park Museum. Silver work was unknown to them.

Dogs, too, were at their side when they hunted the wolf, or when they shepherded their goats. They dispossessed the Long-heads, and made them their servants. They, too, dwelt in the villages of the Long-heads on Threlkeld Knott and Bleaberry Fell, and these men appear to have used beehive dwellings, and seem to have been sun-worshippers, for they lit a small fire upon the bodies of those they buried. It is possible that they were the builders of the Druids' Circle on Castrigg Fell.

With huge labour they dragged the stones in memory of the great chieftains and stood them in the stone circle, and built the little sanctuary to

the east, and set the stone in the middle to make that circle a sun clock ; and kept time and calendar by the stars as they rose above this or that upstanding stone. Little did they think that their stone circle would be some day used as a doom-ring, court of judgment, and place of tribal meeting by another race, larger of limb, and fairer of hair, and bluer of eye, the Vikings from over the sea.

But between the coming of these Round-heads and the invasion of the Norsemen, another race was seen in the valley. These were the Romans, who, after running their road by the sea coast in the first century, built their Roman Wall, and made their military roads along High Street and over Shap Fell and Stainmoor to Old Carlisle. These dark-eyed foreigners were obliged for security's sake to have their camps and signalling places throughout the Lake District. They have left very little behind them in this neighbourhood, but Castrigg Fell preserves to us a memory of their camping ground, and traces of a Roman road have been discovered upon Armboth Fell, while Causey Pike by its name suggests that the Roman road ran at its foot, and one or two bronze tripod kettles and several Roman coins have been found that speak to us of their existence hereabout.

If we look to the north we see beyond Bassenthwaite, the Moota range, and we know that on the slopes that look down above Bothel, those Romans of old time had their hospital camp for the nursing back of the sick to health. Whilst at the Gale between Latrigg and Skiddaw there is still evidence of what was probably once a Roman look-out camp.

But how did we get the name of Keswick? I believe that we got it from the Norsemen somewhere between 870 and 950 A.D. These forefathers of the dalesmen of our day came over under their leaders Ingolf and Thorolf in two invasions. One of these men was Ketel, son of Ormr. He came up the Derwent, and ran his boats ashore at the wyke, which was thence called Ketel's Wyke. That Ketel's Wyke became Kelsick or Keswick. He probably did not settle here because, a Norseman born, he would be attracted by the Falls of Lodore. He would love the sound of falling water, and the flash of the torrent would remind him of his native home, so he would move thither; and Ketel's Well in the meadow near Lodore, perhaps, remains to us as a memory of the love of his native country.

In whatever direction we look we find traces in the place names of this Norse occupation. Here

immediately to our left, is Walla Crag, the Crag of Walla. Away to the south rises Honig Stadhr, the farm of Honig the Viking, Honister of to-day. Right opposite is Swinside, the seat or high camp of Sweyn or Svein. Across the fell a little further to the north is Thornthwaite, which means 'the clearing' of Thornig. Nearer lies a farm called the Howe, which keeps in mind the Heough or High Place, a raised mound made by some farmer Viking for the burial of his dead, and from the top of which he could look out for his enemies. There under Skiddaw is Ormathwaite, the thwaite or 'clearing in the wood' of Ormr, perhaps the father of Ketel.

Above it lies Underscar, the caer or camp of Hundr the Viking. But the hill most connected with the burial of these chieftains is Latrigg, the ridge of Hlad or death. Early in last century there were discovered on that height a great number of cist-vaens or burial cairns. I never stand upon that hill without being able in fancy to see a sad funeral procession of some old Viking chieftain being borne thither from the valley that he may rest and have outlook for his spirit above the well-loved scene of his life's labour.

Close at my side as in fancy I stand on Latrigg to gaze over the country with its ghylls and howes

and thwaites and dodds and kelds and forces (*i.e.* fosses) that remind me of that Norseman age, the Herdwick sheep are pasturing. They were the sheep, as I believe, that were brought over by these Norse farmers, sheep of mountain breed, as hardy as the hardy Norseman himself. It is quite clear that wherever these herdwicks came from, they came from a country where snow abounded, for the ruffs of the sheep, more hair than wool, and the thick woollen covering upon their legs show that they were meant to find their food in snowy places.

Herdwick mutton is the sweetest in the world, and deserves to be much better known than it is. As one eats it, one seems to be eating game, but how little its characteristic flavour and goodness are known, may be guessed from the fact that when I go to reside in Carlisle, I am unable to obtain it from the butchers there. The Herdwick sheep supplied our Norse farmer folk of old times and their descendants with their hodden grey, and those who will take the trouble to have it woven into woollen cloth will not only find themselves clad in the 'cwoat sea grey' that John Peel wore when he went out hunting, but will find it pleasant in colour and very serviceable against the storm.

Our farmer folk of later time used seldom to kill mutton for fresh meat, though mutton ham, that is, the mutton salted down and dried in the chimney smoke, was a dainty indulged in, in winter time. The staple food used to be 'poddish,' cheese and 'haver bread,' and their fine teeth and their large bones were the result. Thirty years ago one could not enter a farmhouse without finding this 'haver bread' in the basket upon the table at meal times, and the sooner we return to those good old days the better will it be for the people's health. This 'haver bread,' as I believe, came originally from Norway, and was the 'flat brod' of our Norse invaders.

If we go into the Keswick market place on Saturday, we shall meet with the sons of these Vikings. Men with long limbs, long arms, long noses, grey eyes, big square set jaws, so little altered by the lapse of centuries in feature and form, that if you attend any fair in Norway or Sweden to-day, you would believe that you were among Cumberland folk. Still also may you hear as they talk, echoes of their Norseman tongue. Such words as 'rake' for sheep that move one after another across the fell, such words as 'ingle' for the ingle nook, or seat by the fireplace at the farm; such words as 'throng' in the sense of

busy, and 'elding' for firewood, all bespeak the place of their birth.

And echoes of that Northern faith, their faith in Thor and Odin and faith in Baldr, still survive in the place names and even in the herbs they planted and cared for. The old fashion of giving 'arvel' bread to those who had attended a funeral is a Norse one, and the Balderwort or 'Bald-money' grew within memory upon the Vicarage Hill. It is believed that this plant was always planted near a Viking sanctuary.

If we go into the farmhouse dairy and ask to be shown the cream pot, we shall see the cream stick in it made of rowan-tree wood; a stick made of any other wood would not prevent the cream going sour too soon, but why the Viking farmer's wife should pin her faith on rowan wood she has forgotten. The Igdrasil was the holy tree of the Vikings, and the rowan wood was the 'holy azil,' or holy ash, sacred to the gods, so the good wife would place her cream pot in the charge of a divine Providence, and would see that as a charm for her butter making, nothing but the holy wood of the rowan should stir her cream pot.

There is one other Norse custom which tradition has handed on from those Viking times among the people. It is the use of nicknames. Most people

grow up with some such name by which they are known throughout the neighbourhood. Sometimes it is given because of a peculiarity in the shape of a nose, such as 'Nebby'; sometimes because of their work, 'Clocky,' *e.g.* watchmaker; sometimes because of the mere height of a person, he or she will be known as 'Lang Tom' or 'Lang Sarah.' Sometimes a person known to be a gossip going from house to house, will be called 'Clashy Betty,' 'Clashy Sally.' Whatever the nickname may be given to them in early days, it sticks to them through life, and this, as readers of Sagas know, was the Norseman's way.

The Norsemen of old were men of few words, but were fond of epigrams and proverbs. We find this still. How often a dalesman ends his pithy sentence with the expression 'as t' sayin' is.'

'A varra decent quiet man,'—the praise bestowed upon the man who has never interfered with his neighbours—is high praise amongst the dalesfolk, but they have almost endless contempt for the person who loses his temper, and is always ready for a 'fratch.' They speak of him as 'an eggbattler,' 'good for nowt but divelment.' Though not forgiving easily the wrong done them, they will say nothing about it and carry the secret to their grave,—the grave to which

they go with such Norse patience and unrepining —the grave round which they know that all will come who are bidden from far and near.

One other thing remains as an inheritance from the Norse times. It is the love of hard work. A people accustomed from far-off generations to wrestling with Nature in its wildest moods, have never forgotten the powers they have inherited to go on wrestling still. Wrestlers in their games as they are, they are wrestlers in their work also, and the secret of success wherever our Cumbrians go, either as colonists abroad, or as shopmen into the great houses of commerce in our cities, lies in their indefatigable effort to work and their thrifty will to save.

There has been one other invasion of the Keswick valley by a foreign race since the time the Vikings came hither. Of this invasion my dear old friend, the late Fisher Crosthwaite, has been the chief historian. In the year 1561, Queen Elizabeth conferred through her secretary Cecil, with John Steynbergh, a German, and James Thurland, Master of the Savoy, upon warrant for the incorporation of a company for the working of mines in England. Three years after, these grants for working mines and minerals in England and Wales were transferred to another German, a

certain Daniel Heckstetter. In May of 1565 copper ore said to contain silver was found in certain places in Cumberland, and the Queen was requested to grant warrant to bring three hundred or four hundred foreign workmen to work it. On the 20th September of the same year, the first contingent of German miners, twenty in number, came to Keswick. They did not find a very hearty welcome. The Radcliffe family, who owned the Derwentwater estate at that time, sided with the Earl of Northumberland in his claim against the Queen to the sole right of minerals hereabout. Lady Radcliffe would not allow any wood to be cut down for use in the mines, either for props or fuel, and backed up the English workmen, who ill-treated the Germans.

The result of it was, that wood had to be sent for to Ireland, and eventually the Earl of Northumberland's contention was ended by a suit between himself and the Queen, in which through, as I believe, a faulty assaye, the Queen won the day, inasmuch as it was adjudged that, since there was more gold and silver in these mines than copper or lead, the royalty belonged to the Queen and not to the Earl of Northumberland.

Between this time and 1607, the mines hereabout were worked by the Company of the royal mines,

who made Daniel Heckstetter their work master to encourage the German colony. The ore, it appears, was brought from Newlands to beyond Calvert Bridge by the Greta river, and the smelting mills were put down at a place still called the Forge. The mill race, which we speak of as the Hammer Hole, cut with wedges and big hammers in the same way as levels were driven in the mines at Newlands, may still be seen.

The Germans who came over bore such names as the following: Heckstetter, Calvert, Ritseler—which afterwards became Raisley—Moser, Puphbarger, Clocker, Colysinge, Stanger, Hedgler, Flowterer, Slaygll, Beyrnparker, Prowker, Lipmawer, Hound, Sanninger, Torver, Norspalmer, Tempp, Tiffler, Tibler, Cayrus, Beck, Zinogle, and Yearle. They intermarried with Keswick women, and one of the earliest marriage registers in the Crosthwaite parish register is, Hanre Moser, Duchman, and Elizabeth Clark of Newlands, Nov. 23rd, 1567.

They rose to considerable importance in the neighbourhood. Thus Daniel Heckstetter, who died in 1610, was one of the eighteen sworn men, who managed the school of Crosthwaite, and he and his wife, Radigund Heckstetter, were benefactors of the school. One of the family at a later

time became master of the Grammar School at Carlisle and Rector of Bolton, in Cumberland. Another, Sir Robert Beck by name, who appears to have been domestic chaplain at the Island, married as his wife a servant of the Island, Janet Fawcett, and in 1597 was appointed Vicar of Crosthwaite, and held the living for fifteen years.

Another of these German miners, William Calvert, became Foreman of the Governors of the Crosthwaite School in 1656, and the two families, Raisley and Calvert, originally Ritseler and Calvert, intermarried. We who are lovers of Wordsworth have reason to be grateful for that intermarriage, for it was young Raisley Calvert who, dying in his early manhood, left such a legacy to William Wordsworth as enabled the poet to give his whole time to the work of his high calling.

The works of the mines in this country were destroyed, we are told, by Cromwell's army. Many of the miners were slain in the Civil Wars, and the copper mines, both at Coniston and Keswick, were closed.

The Germans had not only set going copper mining in this country, but taught the art of roasting and smelting the ore to the people of South Wales also; and though Camden, writing in 1671, says, 'the work in Keswick, Newlands,

is quite left and decayed, though some do melt forth as much good copper as serveth them to make halfpennies and farthings,' that art of roasting and smelting which went from Keswick to South Wales in 1584 never died out.

But the Germans in this neighbourhood have almost entirely passed away. The only name now remaining that was brought here in Elizabeth's time from Germany is the name Earle. Two or three years ago, a lad served as assistant master at Crosthwaite Boys' School, whose name was Senogle, but he was not Keswick born.

It is quite true that they have left behind them some facial characteristics. The broad square head of the German may still be seen both in boys and girls in Keswick, who come from the mixed stock of Norse and German. But as to the language, except for the words, 'forebye' and 'clem,' which are in constant use, not a trace of the German tongue remains.

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MORNING AND EVENING AT CROSTHWAITE.

It is New Year's evening, old style, January 12, and a quarter to five by the clock. For the past half-hour the western sky has been deepening into glowing gold, and at the zenith and away beyond Bassenthwaite to the north, over bars of tender green, the whole heaven is softest blue. Against the western glory the snow-powdered hills of Hindscarth, Causey Pike, Grisedale, and Grasmoor stand up as if they were rather lucent mist against a solid background of gold, than solid mountains against a curtain of limpid air. A curious line of light runs in outline round the mountain heads that trembles now into opal, now passes away, and again appears, but there is no sign of cloud from height to depth in the clear molten sky above their heads.

Into that serene ocean no angel barque of sunset will glide, and all the dragons of night dare nothing

venture there. The sun, long sunk behind the hills—nay, dipped, for all we know, beyond the seaboard verge, has only one wish to-night. It is this—to send back word of such tranquillity from the new world whither he has gone that all the men of the East must rise and follow, and all the passion and pain on earth long to be bathed in that pure ocean flood of glorious calm. Even the rook that, belated, is hurrying to the island wood on Derwentwater is silent, the old horse in the grey-powdered meadow hard by lifts its head quietly to gaze, and I doubt not but that the very fox who is now leaving his bield upon the fellside crag must turn and look a moment westward.

But for me, my eyes are caught from west to east, for suddenly the whole of Skiddaw and Helvellyn seem to glow into flame, molten masses of fire seen from within, through silver-frosted casing of winter, turn them into vast transparencies, and the sky behind, just now so dead and dull, is alive and luminous. Every tree and copse, a few minutes ago grey-brown, flashes into copper brown and ruby purple, and you might believe that suddenly the sun had determined to wheel back from underneath the ocean marge and utterly forbid the night. The lake just now lay white as snow, but now from the woodland shores the wondrous light of fern and

beech-leaf seems to have floated out and made it suddenly gold.

The children meet you with their faces to the east, and the light from Skiddaw, reflected through the valley air, turns their cheeks into rosiest glow. But there is more than sun upon their faces; there is moonlight too. The full moon, white as silver, has sailed up above Helvellyn, and the witchery of this short quarter of an hour lies in the power of moonlight and afterglow to mingle and to make magic as they mix.

We are standing in the Crosthwaite Churchyard now. 'Ay, ay, poor thing! I cud weel hev wished her back if it was fur nowt but fur yan sic a sight of Crostet Vale. Wonderful noo, isn't it? I've thowt mair about sunsets sen she died. But she was in pain, and may be it's as weel she went and what barn she's at rest. Yan cannot leuk at sic a sun-setting and not feel that hooiver.' The sunset had at least spoken to one soul in Crosthwaite to-night. The old fellow turned from the churchyard as he spoke, and ere the iron gate clanged beneath the yews the light had failed at the zenith, the light had faded from the snow-white flanks of Skiddaw, black clouds were born to brood above the western hills, and a cold dead moon with weary face looked down upon the living and the dead.

But morn as well as eventide in Keswick Vale are at this time of the year full of witchery. I cannot say why it is, but it seems as if since the shortest day of the year the mornings have been growing darker and the sun later in his rising. This morning at eight o'clock, as I walked down into the valley, you might have supposed, from all one could see of the coming day, that his majesty the sun had determined to 'sleep in,' as we say in Cumberland. Any idea of coming forth as a bridegroom from his chamber and rejoicing as a giant to run his course would have seemed to-day very far from his thoughts, and yet it is near the end of the second week of January.

Skiddaw lies dwarfed and haggard ; the snow has powdered his lower raiment and laid deep winter whiteness on his head. Black as jet are the enclosure walls upon him and ebon-black the little copses and the larch plantations on his skirts. The sky is neither blue nor grey at the zenith, and Helvellyn to the south is almost silver white. The trees in the vale are drear in their nakedness beyond description, and one would suppose that the sheep in the near field would have died of hunger in the night, so bare and barren seems their pasture-ground. Not a cock-crow is heard, not a black wing from the rookery wood is seen in heaven.

The light is so weirdly strange on the shadowless vale and shadowless mountain slopes that one asks oneself, Is this dawn or eventide? Away above the Skiddaw Dodd to the north a star trembles brilliantly.

It is Sunday morning; the bell chimes for early service, and along the half-dusky road come a few muffled figures towards the bell. The old horse stands in a cloud of his own breath as he noses the ground at his feet. It is bitter cold; the churchyard gate clangs, and service goes forward. Then again the gate clangs, and cheery voices are heard in the road. 'What a transformation scene! What a sunrise! I never saw so much light in heaven before without a sun!' And the speaker spoke but truth.

Half an hour ago you would suppose the earth was never to see another morning. Sunlessness and silence deep as death was over all the scene. The vale was grizzled grey with hoar frost, the mountains grey with powdered snow were black where the snow lay lightly as though they had all been charred by some great cataclysm of fire, and these scars had been covered with white ashes.

But what a change a few minutes have worked in heaven and earth. Now gloriously radiant shone the buttresses of gulfy Skiddaw; the umber red

of the bracken slopes appeared like rose impearled. The dead larch copses seemed yellowing with the spring, and on Grisedale and the western hills blue cobalt shadows lay upon shining ivory. The trees glistened with new life; the leaves upon the road, crisped and curled, shone as if diamond dust had been given them to add to their last days of earthly service. The poplars stood up towers of gold against the glowing dawn, the far lake glittered, the cocks crew, the sheep shone white as milk toward the brightened east, and the rooks came streaming across the cloudless heaven with happy voices, as if they knew to-day would be sunshine all the day, and they were determined to enjoy themselves even if a good deal of hard field labour must be done.

But not yet had the great sun rolled from behind Helvellyn into sight. All this light in the valley, on meadow and tree, was but the glory that foresaw his rising, and still, though all the summits of the hills were golden bright, the lower skirts were wrapped in ghostly grey. Far overhead in faintest blue, like flocks of sheep, the tender companies of clouds were moving to the south. But one cloud lingered in the west and seemed scarcely to move at all; it was the pale morning moon.

I wandered homeward, and the little wrens kept

company with me, seemed to invite me to a game of hide-and-seek. The tree-creeper ran, mouse-like, up tree or wall, as if it really enjoyed its hunting; and from the eaves and chimneys the starlings in their happiness ran through their bits of human talk, mimicked the man that broke stones by the road, the gardener wheeling his creaking barrow, the thrush that called to his mate, the boy that whistled, the dog that barked, the cock that crowed from the distant farm, for they, too, seemed to feel the night was over and gone and the morning was assured to them.

It was a wondrous transformation. One hardly could have guessed that the giant behind Helvellyn in thirty minutes' space could have wrought such change from death to life, from hopelessness to hope, and given to mountain-head and meadow and man and bird and beast for dreariness such cheer. But, after all, that surely was what the dawn was meant for. This is the message of each new sunrise for the mind. But men will not see it. They go crowding up into the great towns and shut themselves up in labyrinths of brick and mortar. And even those who stay behind in the quiet countryside fill themselves with such anxieties and care they have not heart to lift their eyes to heaven or let the magic of the morning work its charm.

SKATING ON WINDERMERE.

It was my good fortune during the first winter of my residence in the Lake Country, to see Windermere frozen over from end to end. The ice bore in the Pullwyke Bay and between Belle Grange and the Island, long before it was safe to venture across from Wray to Lowwood.

In those first few days we seemed to have the ice almost to ourselves. Towards evening there came both from Ambleside and Bowness, the village folk, and what had been before silence except for the thunderous cracks that sounded from shore to shore, and the murmurs of the uneasy frost giant, became now filled with sound, for the men brought their hockey sticks with them, and, as Wordsworth puts it in his 'Prelude,'

> 'All shod with steel,
> We hissed along the polished ice in games
> Confederate, imitative of the chase
> And woodland pleasure,—the resounding horn,
> The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.'

On one day, taking the 'Prelude' in my pocket, I went over to spend the later afternoon on Esthwaite water in order that I might realise more fully the marvellous truth of the poet's description of his boyhood's skating. I came back with the full belief that Wordsworth after all, was not so much describing skating on Esthwaite as skating upon Windermere, beneath the precipices of the Claife heights between the Ferry and Belle Grange.

But whether on Esthwaite or on Windermere, to which over Sawrey he came so often with his young boy friend, William Raincock of Rayrigg, whom he has immortalised in that passage of that fifth book of the 'Prelude' which begins :

> 'There was a Boy, ye knew him well ye cliffs
> And islands of Winander!'

I have always thought that memories of skating at eventide between the Ferry and Wray, or in the Pullwyke Bay, could never be more felicitously described than they were described by Wordsworth in that remarkable passage in the first book of the 'Prelude,' from which I have already quoted, and which I dare now in full to reproduce :

> 'It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
> The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,

Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.'

Slowly the news of the freezing of Windermere made itself known in north Lancashire, and crowds of excursionists came over for the day. Hot-pots were ordered from the various hotels for the mid-day repast. One of these said hot-pots was set upon the ice by someone who was evidently ignorant of the elemental laws of heat and cold, and when the skaters returned from a spin up the Lake, a round hole and some dark water was all that remained to them of the luncheon they had looked forward to.

But there were other and more perilous holes that were open in that fateful frost, small pools which the wild fowl by their congregating at them prevented from freezing night by night and day by day. It was in such a pool midway between Lowwood and Wray that a neighbour and friend lost his life.

Lieutenant B—— was crossing after dark upon his skates to his happy home at High Wray, when without warning, he must have suddenly shot not only into a water pool, but right on under the ice. No cry was heard, and none knew of his fate, but the sorrow at the dawn over all the village is still heavy upon me, as I write, for he was beloved of all.

It was not until sixteen years after that I saw

Windermere frozen over again. I had been called to Lancashire on business, and on a day that the papers reported that Windermere was one sheet of black ice, and that the thermometer was registering 22° of frost, I set out with a goodly company of Manchester men, who were determined not to be cheated of a chance of 20 square miles of black ice. We were soon steaming away from the blackened city into the clear country-side and its fields of spotless white. How the snowfields flickered into living diamonds as we passed swiftly by, how blue the sky, how black the distant hedgerows!

Preston was reached, its river alive with boys let loose from school; Lancaster was passed, and it seemed as if the whole town were in promenade upon the Lune. Soon the hills of Lakeland shone like the far-seen scars of the Carrara hills away above the waters to the west. Sheets of dazzling ice upon the sand at high-water mark and clouds of sea birds busy at some dead carcase washed ashore told us of bitter cold and death the sea birds must almost have envied. A bird that keeps its crop full can stand arctic cold, but woe to the bird whose food fails him in time of frost. A farmer got into our carriage at Carnforth with a rook he had found dead, but sitting upright with

claws hard frozen to the branch. 'Yes,' said he, 'birds hes a queer time of it noo, poor things; it's mebbe best sleep as he could ha taken, after aw.'

At Kendal the platform was packed with expectant skaters, more carriages were added, and then the lovers of black ice must stand up, for seats there were not. But everybody was in hearty spirits, though the long train did but crawl up the long incline, and impatient youngsters suggested that they might quite as well walk as ride. But Windermere station was reached at last, and we were soon spinning cheerily down on the top of a well-loaded omnibus to the Lake.

As we descended towards the village that clusters round St. Martin's Church we saw people like black ants moving hurriedly to and fro upon the frozen level of the lake. Then the landings were reached, and such a scene presented itself as can only be seen in some old Dutch city in mid-winter. The whole interspace between the land and the island was powdered white from the innumerable iron heels of the skaters. Here, a pony with its jangling sleigh bells dashed along; there, fond fathers pushed their little ones in perambulators. A hurdy-gurdy man made music here, and yonder, on St. Mary's Holme, a brass band blew its best, and risked frozen lips and frost-bitten fingers in

the process. Tea, one was reminded, was obtainable here ; oranges were possible there.

Presently a great boat-sail was seen to belly to the wind, and an iceboat slid past. Big people, little people, middle-sized people panted against the wind, or turned and opened their coats and spun past without effort. Paterfamilias toddled without skates, and screamed his threatenings to venturesome youngsters. Aged men puffed their pipes and solemnly talked of the frost of forty years ago and when the clock struck it seemed as if all the school lads and lasses in Westmoreland had heard that Her Majesty's inspector's future examinations would be in the art of skating.

It was in more senses than one a moving scene—such changes, such swift and incessant motion, such intricacies of gyre and curve, such health, such life, such happiness! Ah, how one's heart went back with pain to the Manchester slum! and how one could have desired an enchanter's wand to bring the artisan for one short hour from the factory room and give him heels of iron and the wings of the wind, and let him know what a six-mile stretch of black ice could do to drive dull care away! We were determined to make for Ambleside and the head of the lake.

Off we sped, warned by red flags to keep well

over to the western shore. Away along beneath the haunted woods, where the spectral Crier is heard to call for passage to the other side; away towards Bell ground and the slopes that the Castle of Wray crowns with a kind of baronial splendour. The cones of Ill Bel and Frost-Wyke and High Street rose up pure white against the eastern sky. The Roman legionaries must have shivered as they passed along that height in the year 250 A.D., for in that year Windermere must have been frozen as Old Father Thames was frozen.

Away we spin now, truly not up the height, but over the reflected beauty of that range, for so marvellous are the mirror planes of this jet-black polished floor that the glories of snow and sunshine upon High Street dance right across the lake, and seem to be clouds of impalpable splendour coming up to us from the frozen deep. Now Wetherlam and Coniston Old Man rise up above the Furness Fells to the west, and soon the Langdale giants, grim and grey like couchant lions, appear to the north-west in solemn winter beauty. But it is to the circle of the Fairfield range all eyes are directed. The sky was suddenly changed to gold, and the ice floor went into burnished brass, and over the hills out Wry-Nose way the sun sank slowly into a haze of its own making. The reeds at the mouth

of the river Brathay stood pure gold, the trunks of the dark pines at the river's edge shone with a wonderful flush, and the faces of all the skaters as they turned to the west glowed and gleamed. Then, as we spun towards the landing stage at Waterhead, the light faded from Wansfell and from Loughrigg ; we felt almost as if the hand of Death had been laid upon us all, and the ice was deserted for the day.

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MARCH MARVELS AT THE LAKES.

We had had less snow on the tops than shepherds could remember for ten years past, and the consequence was that Helvellyn's flanks, instead of being blanched into whiteness and so deathlike that one felt that life could never come again into its outstretched bulk, were already smitten into a grey-greenness that gave the shepherd heart. He knew that in a month's time the Herdwick sheep would begin to know the joy of motherhood, and that a good deal of his future luck with the flock depended upon the eatage possible for them in the intervening weeks.

But to-day was the first day of spring in his calendar: it was the 21st of March; and though he could not give any reason for the faith that was in him, except that 'oor fadders had allus reckoned 21st to be spring day,' and though when pressed he would only guess that 'it hed to deu wi' t' langest day likely as was three months

forrart,' of this at any rate he was sure, that from time out of mind on the 21st of March the shepherds had gone to 'lait' or bring in the herdwicks from the fells, to see if any less robust than the rest, needed a month's grass in the home-intake to give them heart for lambing time.

There are few things much more interesting than to watch this raking of the fells to bring the mountain wanderers from upland solitudes to the valley farms, and on March 21st I started to climb into Skiddaw Forest to watch the process. It could hardly be called, as Wordsworth called it, 'The first mild day of March,' for the robin as he sang was tossed into a ball of fluff, but one spring migrant had already come to the valley, and very delightful it was to welcome the dainty little yellow wagtail by the Greta side. The daffodils were gay in the gardens, the 'ribes' scenting the air, but the wind was cold as Christmas, and the tiny rubies on the larch must have felt they shone too soon.

Who can describe the beauty of those broad-bosomed slopes of Skiddaw as they lay mottled into every shade of purple and puce beneath the full March sun. Skiddaw, lilac throughout the year with the shales of that old world that were here piled up long before the Alps were known,

on such a day of March as this, with no white covering of winter snow upon it, seems by some strange alchemy of its own to have flushed its heather covering with purple dye of every shade from deepest plum to lightest amethyst, and to wear upon its shoulders a mantle of imperial colour whose borders are broidered with the bracken gold as well befits a king.

This glory of March purple upon heather slopes is accentuated for the wanderer up Skiddaw, on a March day by the exquisite foil that is made for the colouring of the Skiddaw background by the near larches that are yellowing to the leaf. The larch tresses are studded with golden knots as well as gemmed with rubies, and these golden knots give to the mass a wonderful squirrel colour.

If one of the March marvels is the purple of the heather slope, another of the March marvels is the plumy wonder of the larch before its greening. The pluminess of the squirrel-coloured larch grove is the direct result of the golden little casket tufts of pollen. Where pollen is there is future life and fruitfulness, and though as yet there is no hint of green and the winds are cold, one cannot look upon a larch wood in mid-March without a sense that spring is already

come, and that new life is already leaping from underground.

We pass up by Birkett Wood to the old road over the Gale, constantly called to look back to the plain beneath, purpled now by the hands of the ploughman, constantly exclaiming at the wondrous wall of blue that lifts up westward beyond the shining lake and coiling river.

Suddenly the light goes out, the whole landscape is darkened, and the wraiths of a dancing sleet storm pass from north to south and veil the mountain walls with filmy curtains of the storm. Another moment and the sky is clear, and from blue heights lightly flecked with cloud the sunshine pours as if it were mid-May.

One of the marvels of March is surely the way in which now the heavens are closed above us and the mountains grow in height, then through the storm veil overhead, rent as by magic, height after height of liquid heaven appears, and again the mountains dwindle to their normal size.

We have won the Gale that the Roman soldiers of old time knew, and see below us, to the south, the whole stretch of Helvellyn bare beneath the sun, and after gazing at that incomparable clustering of the hills beyond Legburthwaite, we carry our eyes round to the sloping buttress of Blen-

cathra, its tawny flank almost grey for contrast with the bronze-brown slopes of Lonscale, and make our way over the short turf round to the gate that gives us access to the ascent of Skiddaw proper.

We climb to the Runic cross that keeps in memory the two generations of men who kept their flocks on Skiddaw; and as we gaze at the farm in the hollow beneath where the Hawells, father and son, toiled at the honourable task of tending the sheep, we wonder if it was ever given to shepherd sons to find a fairer monument.

Thence dropping to the ghyll, that once had the whisper of a larch-tree grove to mingle with its merry music, we mourn for the short-sightedness of the axe that could, for a few pounds, take away from the thousands who climb up Skiddaw's side so much of beauty and delight.

We cross the beck and strike the terrace path that leads across the southern slope of Lonscale to Skiddaw Forest, and now, on our knees, can realise what it was that, as seen from the valley, gave such amethystine colour and purple charm to the mountain side. The heather on near view is seen to be freckled with the tiniest points of blush-pink; its rootlets already have felt the spring. As we walked along we knew that others beside our-

selves felt that winter was past, for the grouse were talking cheerily to one another of a good time coming.

But we were going to watch the shepherds 'rake' the fells. Far away beyond Lonscale Crag we hear a shrill whistle, and see a man raising his hands in semaphore fashion, and we know the dogs are at work. We join him, and are soon able to enter into the shepherds' mystery and magic of language understanded by the dogs.

Far away, hardly visible to us, so like are they in colour to the heather and the rocks, are knots of sheep moving slowly all one way, driven by some invisible impulse known to them and to the shepherd known, but by us unseen. Presently the shepherd puts his finger in his mouth and gives three sharp notes, and the grey knots of sheep, high up above us and far below us, seem to quicken their paces. Three grey specks are seen to move forward at the same moment, though far behind the moving flock. These are the shepherds' friends, the dogs, who are really the workers to-day. Ranging backwards and forwards for a while they come to rest, and the sheep move slowly on; another whistle and a wave of the hand, and whilst two remain stock still as stones, a third collie disappears at break-neck speed down

to the valley, and making a long circling movement is seen, after five minutes, with a single sheep in front of it.

'Do they ever leave sheep behind them?' I said to the shepherd.

'Ah nivver heard tell on it,' he said. 'T' dogs is wonderful things; seem to be able to count almost as weel as a man.'

By and by a long bracelet of these shy mountaineers, coming along the track upon which we are sitting, spies us, and the foremost taps his feet upon the ground, as much as to say to his friends behind him, 'There is a lion in the path'; then without more ado leisurely leaves the way, drops out of sight below it, and reappears on the path with his bracelet of followers a hundred yards beyond us.

Suddenly, for no purpose we could see, one of the herdwicks turns his head back, and, facing for the north, bolts like a thing possessed up the fell side, as though he was determined that come what might he was not going to be driven to the valley, that he at any rate would make a noble protest for freedom, for independence of action, and the wild life he held so dear.

The shepherd puts his tongue in his cheek and gives five piping notes of alarm, and away, almost

out of sight of the champion of independence, scurries the grey wall-eyed collie, and sheep and dog are lost to view for five or six minutes. 'Are they ever coming?' I said.

'Ay, ay, dog will not leave him I'se warrant yeh. Sista they're doon by t' beck side.' And suddenly I, who had been listening to the sound of Glenderaterra chiming far below and filling the air with such music as made me little wonder that all the rocks hereabout were charged with music, for indeed the far-famed Skiddaw musical stones come from the hillside just beneath us, forgot all the sound of the falling waters in my interest of the chase.

Time after time, the herdwick stopped stock still, and though the dog danced hither and thither and barked furiously, it held its ground. 'Odd uns deu behaave that-how and turn stupid,' said the shepherd. 'Some on em's varra queer-tempered ye kna, awkard as a woman-body that cannot hev it aw her oan way, as t' saying is.'

'Do they ever best the dog?' I said.

'Ay, ay, times they do, but ah think Jess ull manish her. She's comin' noo,' and as he said this I saw the herdwick racing as only a mountain sheep can race, along the level sward beside the banks of the beck. 'She'll happen git doon inta

t' beck bottom, and if she deu dog'll not stir her, and I shall hev to lait her to-morrow.'

The shepherd was a true prophet. The sheep had got its back into the under shelf of the beck bank, and all the dogs is Skiddaw Forest would not have moved her. 'Hey-jak!' cried the shepherd to a collie at his feet, and it circled round the cluster of grey-cwoated onlookers who seemed quite as interested as we were in the duel down below, and so slowly we moved over the Lonscale heather till the grey pyramid of Calva and the blue wall of the Wylie Ghyll Fells to the north sank from sight, and as we neared the Lonscale intake the lights of evening were beginning to kindle the height of Blencathra and the many cones upon the back of Helvellyn.

Once in the intake the sheep driven up into a corner of the field were swiftly and deftly handled by the knowing hands of the master-shepherd. His eye could detect almost intuitively, which were the ewes that were in poor condition and needed extra grass pasturage. He generally, if in doubt, caught up the sheep, and in a moment seemed to judge of its weight. The sturdy ones in good condition were sent off with none but a dog to take them back to the fell breast, the others remained, unwilling prisoners, to better fare.

Along to the farm-stead and over the beck, and so to Brundholme woods we passed ; below us the Greta ran streaming and coiling to the west, and as we went the light grew so wondrously upon Blencathra's flank and breast, burned so marvellously upon Helvellyn's height that we were forced to stand still and gaze and forget even the home to which we were bound.

It was close on seven o'clock, and the transformation lights each moment grew in glory. Blencathra, just now golden-rose, flamed out in ruby red ; the heights that still keep Wodin's name at Wanthwaite Crag seemed veritably incandescent through and through. The woody gorge through which the Greta came with its young birches seemed to be lit with tongues of flame, and all the trees of the woodland near stood up in glowing amethyst.

The leafage on the underwood of the oak, the dead bracken on the slope at my side, shone illuminated as if by a mighty Bengal light, but for the steadiness with which all burned one would have believed oneself in the centre of some strange auroral glow. The river, just now silver green under a white-green sky overhead, ran purple-rose beneath the hill. Even the birds seemed startled by this sudden afterglow. They paused in their

song, and it was not till the wonder began to fail that I heard their voices ringing again through the dusky wood.

But all things come to an end. Blencathra faded into lilac, the lilac passed to grey, and by the time the shepherd had turned his last sheep to the fell, and called his dogs to heel for supper and for rest, except for the saffron yellow over Wythop woods, there was nothing to remind us of that world of flame that had brought with it to the Cumberland fells the gladness of the first spring day, and taken with it the thanks of many a weary heart for the marvels of March it had bestowed.

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A CRACK ABOUT HERDWICK SHEEP.

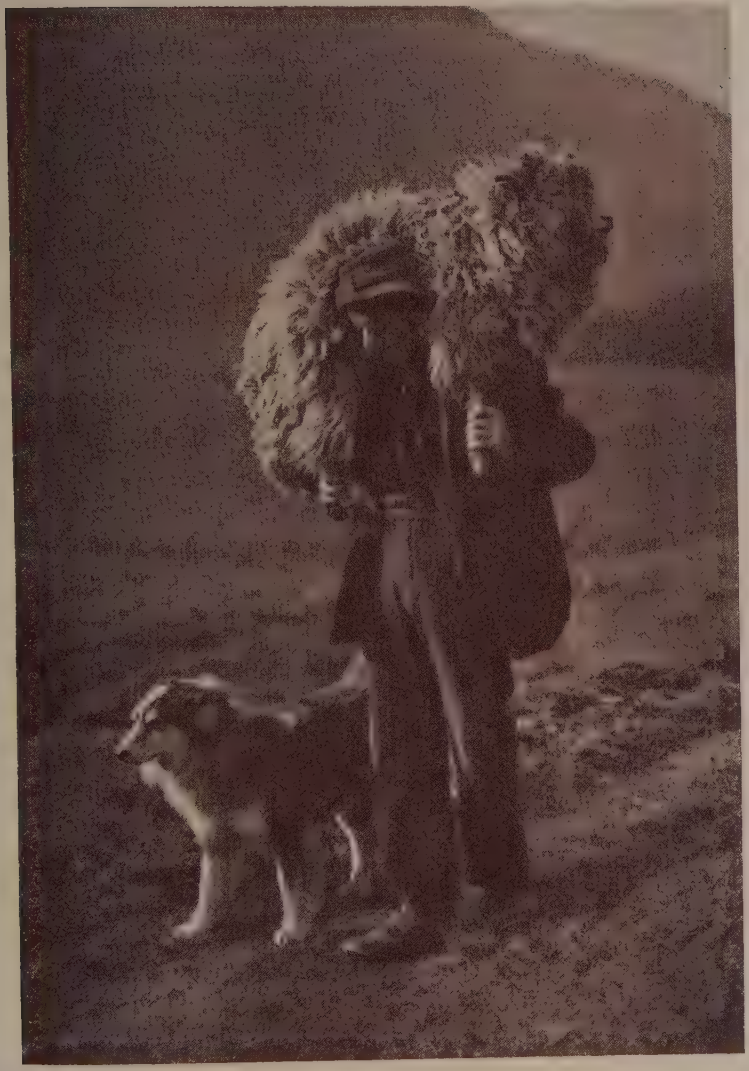
Visitors to our Lake Country, as they ramble over the fells, must be constantly struck with the exceeding beauty of the delicate, lithe, little sheep, with their shy black faces and their dainty feet, that give life to the mountain side; and if they are here at the time when the lambs go off to the 'heaf,' they may find themselves obliged to pause and wonder at the pretty play of the children of the flock.

Occasionally they may hear a sound, almost as of guns being fired, and they may watch a couple of rams doing battle in a lonely place, retiring and then charging at one another with a leap into the air, with the result, as one would suppose, of broken necks, probably with no other effect than a sore head and baddish headache. They will observe how, on their approach, sometimes a sheep, on the look-out, apparently on guard, will stamp its feet and sniff in attitude of defiance,

and they will gather, from what they have seen of the duel and this foot-stamping, that these sheep are fiery-hearted creatures, and of altogether different temperament from the ordinary type of sheep met in the Lowlands.

And they are right. For these sheep are unique in many ways. The word 'herdwick,' by its terminative, suggests a warrior breed. These hardy warriors, it is believed, came over originally to our hills with human warriors of as hardy a make, the Norsemen from over the foam, and by the ruffs of hair upon their necks and the shape of their Roman noses, were evidently intended to fend for themselves in snowy places, where grass was scarce.

The most remarkable characteristics of these Herdwick sheep are their homing instinct and their marvellous memories. Of this latter there are many proofs to hand. For example, a flock of sheep, driven down a road which was blocked at the time, had to pass through a gate, and so back again through another opening in the wall to the roadway. This was when they were being driven back to the fells. They did not pass along that road again for many months. The road was no longer blocked, and the wall had been built up, but as soon as they came to



A GOOD SHEPHERD

the place where the wall had been built up, they all topped the wall and insisted on going back again through the gate. I have myself seen a flock driven along the road, suddenly, when they came to a certain place, spring into the air, and was told that at that particular point in the former year, a pole had been across the road, and the sheep had jumped it when they came to the place. Though no obstruction now existed, they leapt over an imaginary pole.

But the homing instinct is the most remarkable feature in their character. If a lamb, after being suckled on the mountain 'heaf' or place of pasture, is taken away from it after six or eight weeks, and carried miles away, it will never forget the place of its infancy, but will, as soon as the restless feeling of the next springtime calls it to the mountain tops, if it has opportunity, make its way through fair or foul over miles of country back again to its 'heaf.' I have met solitary sheep in the dales wandering back from their far-off wintering pastures to their fellside 'heafs,' and once, late at night, I came upon a ewe passing up the Keswick main street, probably on its way to Helvellyn. I have heard of a flock being sold at the Cockermouth market, and taken right away to Skinburness on the Solway, with

the result that the bulk of them went back of their own accord to the mountain heights, miles away to the south of Cockermouth.

Authorities are divided as to the actual meaning and derivation of this word 'heaf.' It may come from the Danish 'hævd' or 'hœvd,' Icelandic 'hefd' or 'hefda,' which means a place of occupancy and habitual possession by prescriptive right; or it may come from the word 'heuf,' old Danish 'hov,' Swedish or Danish 'hof,' which means a shelter or home-place. It is enough for us to know that heaf-going sheep, as they are called, means sheep that have a special place upon the mountains appointed them for pasture. The various valley farms carry so many sheep. A farm is let and the sheep by valuation go along with it. Each 'heaf' carries only a certain number of sheep, and very jealously the farmers watch one another to see that no more than the rightful number are allowed to go up to the fell.

This homing instinct also seems to combine with it a remarkable sense of proprietory right as well as locality. The sheep appear to know their bounds almost to a yard upon the mountain-side, where they have the right to feed, and though there are no walls or a fence to prevent them straying beyond their pastures, they do not do

this, or if they do it, they are pushed back by the neighbour flock. It is this power of guarding their own that obliges the farmers to keep up their flocks to a certain strength. The flocks press against one another, and keep the peace as they keep their bounds, because their strength is equal.

They are very weather-wise, these herdwicks. If a storm comes on in winter-time, they will at once seek the tops, because they know the wind will not allow the snow to lie there. A shepherd who goes after his flock at these times will bring them down at once, for though they are very hardy, if they once get chilled through by the blizzard, they never seem to recover from it.

Their agility is the result of their being always in training. They never grow fat, in fact it may almost be said that no herdwick mutton, which is the sweetest of its kind in Great Britain, is ever obtained from the fellside. They must be fattened for the market in valley pastures.

The management of the sheep is very much as follows: Towards the end of February, any sheep upon the fells are gathered for dipping, to guard them against the fly, of which more anon. At the end of February to the beginning of March the ewes, big with young, of their own instinct, come

down towards the mountain farms. There is a general 'raking' of the fells by the shepherds, which commences in the Skiddaw neighbourhood on the 21st March, and after this for some weeks the fells are silent and lifeless. Sometimes hay is given to the sheep in addition to the better grass of the valley enclosures for a week or fortnight previous to their becoming mothers.

There is, however, not so much hay given to the winter sheep upon the fells as there used to be. The shepherds prefer to go round periodically and see how the sheep are doing, and if they find any small or weakly ones not doing well, they bring these down into the home fields and give hay to them. Of course, in heavy snow, the whole flock have to be fed till the snow is gone. They drop their lambs at any date between April 14th and May 14th. The mothers and their lambs are kept in the intakes till it is thought the lambs are strong enough to go up to the fells, and as they become strong enough, they are driven off, so that by the end of the second week of May they are all on the fellside. It is the custom of the shepherds at once to take the sheep to that part of the 'heaf' that is furthest from home.

Before the lambs go up to the fells they are ear-marked and 'smit' or 'smitted.' These ear-marks

come down from a very ancient past. They are the 'lug'-marks or 'law'-marks of the Norsemen, 'lug' and 'log' being in the Scandinavian tongue the same word for law. Each flockmaster has his own mark. Some ears are 'slit'; others are 'ritted'; others are 'tritted'; others are 'spoon'-marked; others are 'key-bitted,' 'fork-bitted,' 'under-bitted,' 'upper-halved,' 'under-halved,' or 'half-sheared.' Others again are 'stoved,' 'stuffed,' or 'cropped,' that is, have the whole of the tip of the ear cut off. It is only certain manorial hall farms that have the right to cut off the whole ear. It is considered a very dishonourable thing to tamper with the ear or lug-mark. The word 'cut-lug,' as applied to a man, is a term of greatest opprobrium. The first thing that a sheep-stealer would do, of course, is to tamper with the lug-marks, or to cut off the whole ear to prevent recognition.

With regard to the 'smit' marks, these take the form of bugles, or sword marks or crosses, or simply 'smits' or 'strakes,' with 'pops' or dots, and these in black or red or blue are put on different parts of the body, according to the flockmaster's traditional usage. These various flock-owner's marks are all catalogued in three books.

The Shepherd's Book or *Guide* was the invention of a certain J. Walker, of Martindale, in the

year 1817, and his object in bringing out the work was, he tells us, so that everyone 'might have the power of knowing the owner of a stray sheep and so be able to restore to every man his own.'

This first book was for the western fells, that is, west of the Eden valley. When the *Shepherd's Book* for the east fells was brought out two years later, the blocks for illustration were borrowed from J. Walker. In 1839 a larger *Shepherd's Guide* was published at Penrith by Joseph Walker's nephew, J. Mattinson, and his friends. Ten years later a *Shepherd's Guide* for the most southern and westerly fells was brought out by William Hodgson at Ulverston, and the latest and largest *Shepherd's Guide* was probably that published in 1873. The number of flock-marks arranged and recorded in that book are 1571.

It is now getting a little out of date, and an effort was made three years ago to revise it by Tom Wilson of Keswick, but he died of cold caught at the Mardale shepherds' meeting, which he attended in order to get on with the work, and its revision has therefore been delayed. I would recommend any tourist visitor at a farmhouse in the Lake district to ask for sight of this interesting book. His identification of the flock-marks

will much add to his interest as he crosses the fells.

Every lamb before it is allowed to go up to the fell is thus marked for life, and carries in its ear or 'lug,' and sometimes on its horns, as well as upon the wool upon its back, the lug-mark or law-mark by which its master can claim it wherever found. There are shepherd gatherings once or twice in the year for various well-defined areas, and any lost sheep is brought to these gatherings and restored to its owner.

The sheep are left upon their 'heafs,' or feeding places, with their lambs until the first week of July, except in times when the 'mawk' or maggot-fly or blow-fly is very rife, and is striking the flock fiercely. In that event the sheep are brought down to the farm enclosures and their fleeces are powdered with sulphur.

Early in the year, in February or the beginning of March, as was stated, future mothers of the flock have been dipped against this 'mawk,' 'wick,' or blow-fly, and it is only in certain 'mawkish' seasons that the sulphur cure is necessary. Shepherds tell me that there is no accounting for its presence on the fell; that some fells are notoriously bad when some close by are free. It is asserted that the increase of bracken

on the fells has increased the presence of the 'mawk.' My own idea is that it is the absence of the burning of the bracken which has really caused this increase, for the bracken when it was burned destroyed the 'mawk' in embryo.

It is noticed that the fly is most likely to smite the sheep, as it is called, if there is a heavy thunder shower, and after it not sufficient sunshine to quickly dry the fleeces. It is believed that this is owing to the greasy smell of the wool in its half-wet condition, which attracts the fly. Shepherds very much dislike leaving a dead sheep unburied on the fell, for they say that the dead body becomes a centre for 'mawk' or 'wick' breeding. Nothing can be more pitiable than the distressful condition of a sheep bearing about in its body the living plague of the thousands of eggs deposited within its wounded being. They are eaten to death if not found in a few days, and they are very difficult to find when they are smitten, for in their pain they go off, it seems, to die alone, and hide in bracken and rocks, and will hardly stir until you get quite close to them. Against this terrible scourge, the flock-masters very often dip their sheep in August and again in October or early November, the Board of Agriculture having ordered all sheep to be dipped twice in the year

with a dipping approved by them, for the purpose of preventing and curing scab, and though, as far as I know, there is no scab in this district, this dipping in August against the maggot-fly is very useful.

But the maggot-fly is not the only plague that troubles our mountain sheep, for the fluke in the liver is a common complaint, sheep-rot is another, and last and most curious is the disease that is called 'sturdy.' The shepherds who are Norsemen do not know that when they say that a sheep is 'sturdy' they are talking Norman French, but so it is, for the word 'étourdi,' meaning giddy, exactly describes the condition of the sheep in whose brain this living torment is growing. The brain-afflicted creature is found at once to put its neck on one side and to be constantly spinning round on its own axis. It soon loses condition and dies unless a shepherd skilled in trepanning the sheep's skull and removing the little bladder which is the cause of the trouble, comes to its aid.

Certain shepherds in the Lake District have quite a name for dealing with this particular disease, and they are sent for for miles to treat a sheep. The disease is located partly by the fact that it causes blindness in one eye, and is always situated in the lobe of the brain opposite the blind eye. In

the old days the skull of the creature to be operated upon was burned through with a red-hot iron. Nowadays an incision is made with a sharp knife, and the brain being laid bare, a feather is taken and very carefully wound round the little bladder and used as an extractor. A little bit of cloth or tar plaster is put upon the place, and the sheep goes away, apparently nothing the worse, to its 'heaf.' Within a day or two it seems to have recovered its normal health.

But there is another sickness which causes distress to the flock-master. Sheep on certain high pastures are said to become 'souted.' They lose flesh and begin to wither away. The shepherds know quite well what is the matter with them. They have been eating cotton grass or 'sout,' and they know also, if they remove them from the 'heaf' and take them down to certain pastures for a fortnight or three weeks for a change, they will recover from their sickness and be able to go back to their fell and suffer from 'sout' no more. I have sometimes wondered if Souter Fell, in the Blencathra range, obtained its name because of the growth of 'sout' or cotton grass.

At the beginning of July the shepherds go off to the fells to 'lait' the sheep for the shearing.

It is worth while going with them, if only to see the work of the dogs. The dogs know quite well that it is their duty to collect the sheep to certain well-known collecting places, and they do this almost unbidden by their masters. Away goes the dog and is lost to sight for half an hour or more, and by the time the shepherd has got to a certain point he will find the sheep have been rounded up, and are waiting to be counted.

I do not think there is anything more wonderful than the intelligence of well-trained shepherd dogs. The master is down below, and the dog is watching from an eminence high above. 'Ga way hint,' cried the master, and the dog comes right down to him, goes behind him and takes a long sweep, curving left or right according to the lifting of the master's hand. Presently he is seen driving the sheep perhaps too fast, a sharp whistle from the master, and he stops. Another long whistle, and he immediately begins to drive the flock forward. 'Ga away by,' cries the shepherd, and the dog at once rushes to the head of the flock and turns it. 'Dista?' (do you hear?) and the dog stops to listen, and appears to be able to take in any command that its master may be inclined to give him.

I have heard of a shepherd who so trained his dog that at a distance of nearly a quarter of a mile

from where he stood, he could make that dog understand that his duty was to divide the sheep that were being driven along in front of him into two divisions. He simply waited until a certain sheep was in front of the dog and immediately cried out, 'That un,' and the dog at once turned it back. This process of selection went on until the sheep were in two divisions, one to be driven back by the dog to the 'heaf,' and one down to the farm-steading.

In no way do the dogs show their sagacity better than when they are helping their masters to find sheep that are lost in the snow. They seem able to scent the place in the snow-drift where the sheep are buried, and begin scratching violently. The shepherd at once digs down and finds his sheep 'smuddert,' as they say, in the drift.

But to return to July and the clipping time. The sheep and lambs are brought down together from the high fells and given a good night's rest in the farm intake. Each farm has its own clipping day from time immemorial. There are perhaps from 600 to 1200 sheep to be clipped, and as the best hand at clipping cannot clip more than seventy or eighty in a day, and several hands are necessary, the neighbourliness of our dalesmen comes to the rescue. They stream in from far

and near, over hill and dale, with their clipping clothes and their shears in a bundle under their arms; they just pass the day to their host, sit down on the clipping-stools, and the work goes forward, silently except for the pleasant sound of the shears, until the farm girls come out to bid the men to the washtubs outside the kitchen door and the dinner that waits them in the kitchen. Then after a quarter of an hour for 'a smeuk,' back they go to the shadow of the great sycamores and work away till tea-time, and back again till sundown, and on through the long-lighted evening of July.

By eight o'clock the clipping is over, for the day, and a good supper and a shepherd's song or two, perhaps a bit of a dance with the girls of the farm, brings the clipping to an end. With another nod to their host, away they go through the dim twilight over the fells to their own farms, and know that when their clipping day comes, they will have returned to them in kind the friendly help they themselves have given.

The sheep-clipping at a large fell-farm is one of the most picturesque gatherings I know of. Everybody is on the alert. The youngest boy can lend a hand by holding the tape or band by which they tie the sheep's legs, or he can hand the 'sauve'-

stick in case of a wound made by the shears. The elder boys delight in capturing the sheep and carrying them to the shearing stool. The girls very often tie up the fleeces and toss them up to the barn store-room, and the women bodies are all astir in the kitchen seeing to the preparation of dinner and supper.

The extraordinary swiftness of the shearing process astonishes one, and as the wool turns from gold to white beneath the sounding shears, we discover that the sheep are a much more dappled race than we imagined them to be. With regard to that swiftness, now and again a shearer is ambi-dextrous, and such a man as D. J. of Seatoller, by reason of this power, and by using the left hand when the right got tired, has been known to clip more than a hundred in the course of the day.

The men are silent, and the sheep on the clipping-stools are silent, but the crying of the lambs and the bleating of the newly shorn mothers is ever in one's ears, and while the blue smoke from the fire beneath the cauldron curls upward, the pungent scent of tar and grease fills the air.

After the clipping, the lambs are dipped, and I am always sorry for the mothers who think it their duty to claim their lambs by licking them. But I am quite as sorry for the lambs, who are

unable to recognise their new-shorn mothers, and 'sec a heybaaing' goes on for hours 'as nivver was,' till the mother has obliged her child to own her, and both are content.

On the following morning away go sheep and lambs to the 'heaf.' Very whitely shine the mothers among the bracken, as wanderers on our hills at the end of July can testify, but by August, because of the soot that falls upon our fells from Yorkshire and Lancashire, the sheep have become grimy grey, almost brown, and so they remain for the rest of the year. Except for the August dipping, the sheep remain ungathered on the fells till October.

In October the ewes or 'gimmers' are brought down and drafted out for breeding purposes, and the 'wethers' or male sheep, are sent to be fattened for the market. Sheep-shows are the order of the day in this month. By the second week in November the sheep have been all gathered from the high fells. The rams are put to the ewes in the breeding season about the 21st November. As sheep-shows and dog-trials were the order of the day in September, ram-shows are the fixtures in the shepherd's almanack for November. The sheep masters are very careful about altering the strains of blood, and high prices are given for the

hiring of rams at these ram-shows. No money passes for the hiring of the rams till the following ram-show, and then there is often a good deal of haggling if the ram has not turned out as good a father as it was hoped he would be.

At the agricultural shows one watches the judges examining the teeth of the sheep. A twinter, or two-year old, has two broad teeth. A trinter, or three-year old, has four. No sheep is full-mouthed till it is six years old, and any time after this, one or more of the teeth may fall out, but I have heard of a ewe twenty years old with all its teeth in its head, and its milk teeth not shed.

Farmers get rid of their ewes after eight or nine years unless they are particular favourites, but the ewe I have just spoken of has increased its owner's flock every year during the last eighteen spring-tides.

As to the nomenclature of the sheep, it should be known that a 'hogg' is a lamb of last year, unshorn, either male or female ; that a 'gimmer' is a female sheep and a 'wether' a male sheep.

In many enclosures hogg-houses are seen which have misled the tourist, who has been known to ask whether we keep pigs upon the fells. Between the enclosures are often seen holes in the wall, sometimes open, sometimes closed. These are

GOING TO THE FELLS

spoken of as hogg-holes, useful sometimes to human beings as well as mountain sheep, as the following story will show :

Old Betty of Hackett, above Elterwater, had for her spouse a man who incontinently would go off on Saturday night and drink more than was good for him at the public house in the dale. On one occasion she went off to 'lait,' that is, to fetch him home at night. He was seen to be so drunk that neighbours wondered how it was possible that she would be able to climb the fell with him and get him safely home. He was not in a condition to negotiate the walls even where stone stiles existed. They accosted Betty on the following day and said, 'Did ye git heam, Betty, wid him ?' 'Ay,' she said, 'I dud, but it was a sair job.' 'Hoo did ye git him ower t' was (walls) ?' 'I didn't git him ower t' was at aw,' said she, 'I just threshed him through t' hogg-whoals.'

The 'wethers' in November go off to lowland pastures either to be wintered or to go to the butcher. The 'gimmers,' many of them after ramming time, which begins the last week in November, are turned back on to the lower fells, but not before they and the rest of the flock, male and female alike, have been again dipped. In former times, instead of this dipping they were

'sauved,' to give them some kind of waterproof against the winter storms. The 'sauvin' was a great art. The staple of the wool was divided right and left all down the sheep's back, and a mixture of tar and butter was carefully smeared into the roots of the wool by the hand until the whole body had been thoroughly greased and waterproofed.

The dipping may not be so effectual, but as far as the woollen manufacturer goes it is a gain. The woollen weaver will tell you that the cost of cleansing the wool from the grease and dirt of the 'sauve' added much to his trouble and the cost of the weaving. The wool of these herdwicks is still made into most serviceable woollen textures. There are many farmers who insist on having their great coats and their fellside jackets and trousers made of it, and many still send their fleeces, weighing from two to three pounds apiece, to be dressed and woven into cloth. About two fleeces go to a yard, and the sorting, and if necessary the dyeing, and the weaving and the making up into an almost imperishable texture, for the lighter cloth costs 2/6 a yard and for the thicker 4/- a yard. I would advise anyone interested in Home Industries to visit my friend Joseph Scott, the last of a long line of woollen weavers who lives in the

Main Street, Keswick, and see with his own eyes the cloths, the frieze rugs, and plaids and blankets that are made out of Herdwick and Border wool.

The shepherd's life in winter time is not an easy one. He has to be like a barometer, conscious of all weather changes. If snow falls, no matter how small a sprinkling, he needs to go up to the fell with a great hay sheet upon his back. I have sometimes seen these fine fellows struggling not against the weight upon their back, which is considerable, but against the wind which prevents head-way. If a heavy storm comes on and the sheep cannot all be brought down in time, it is quite certain that some of them will be 'smuddert,' and a search for them is a serious matter. Sheep in snow seem to be able to live—so long as the weight is not too great upon their backs—for a long time, especially is this the case if they are near a stone wall, when the snow overblows them, for they are able to drink in air through the dry stone wall. Sometimes they lie down under a rock and get covered over. In this case there is no weight upon their backs, and they are able to live for days. I have heard of sheep that have been taken out from under rocks, still alive, that have been known to have been twenty or twenty-five days buried. Generally in these cases it is found that

they have eaten one another's wool in the pangs of their hunger, so that their poor brothers, though their lives may have been saved, must go very bare indeed for the rest of the year.

What shepherds most fear is that sheep, coming down into a cup-like hollow for shelter, should be overblown with snow there, for the snow melts and the poor creatures are drowned sometimes before they can be recovered. A winter with little snow upon the fells is a shepherd's delight, or a winter that begins with so much snow that the flocks are from early days brought down into the valley. But a winter of snow off and on is a great trouble to them.

They are a fine race these Viking shepherds, as anyone may see who will go to a dog-trial in the Lake Country. We have still amongst us the Michaels that Wordsworth knew and described. And men of character they need to be. They are called to face all storms upon the height. They must find their way through blinding mist and over country that to the unexpert would mean death. You may see them as they go to the 'heaf,' give a lift to the lambs that seem fatigued, one under each arm; you may watch them descending from the heights with a full-grown ewe that has met with some accident over their shoulders, followers

in their humble way of the Good Shepherd, Whom Isaiah foresaw and of Whom he wrote :

'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd : he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.'

Men too they are who are as silent as the silent places wherein their work lies. Even at a shepherds' meeting they are monosyllabic till at the end of it they see the dogs start upon the hound trail, or join the hunters coming 'home from the hill.'

Men of long sight they are, and of marvellous memory. I spoke just now of the memory of the Herdwick sheep—the memory of the master for 'kenning' place and face is more wonderful still. To the ordinary holiday wanderer upon our fells, that a drove of sheep as they pass towards the intake can be thought of or recognised as individuals, appears an impossibility. It is not so with the shepherds. Not only can they tell from a great distance that a sheep belongs to their flock or a neighbour's flock, but I have heard of such a feat of recognition and individualisation as the following : Old J. B. of Seathwaite, in Borrowdale, was so capable of getting to know each lamb in the ten or fourteen days of lambing time, that on one

occasion when he had to put the lug-marks on the lambs born of two hundred mothers of four different stocks or flocks, he was able, without any reference to the mothers themselves, as the boys gathered and brought the lambs out of the pen, to give to each lamb the particular ear-mark of the flock it belonged to without making a single mistake; and I have heard of shepherd boys who have recognised ewes from their particular flock, when suddenly met in some far-off market, though not having seen them at all for a year.

These flock-masters and shepherds talk of their sheep in the Norse tongue. They speak of the sheep 'raking,' that is going one after another across the fell as they do in Iceland to-day. They have their 'out-rakes' and 'intakes' that are found in Norway. 'Gimmer' and 'twinter' or two winters, 'trinter' three winters, are all Icelandic words, and though they have forgotten to count the sheep as their forefathers did up to the beginning of last century, anyone who will refer to local history of the past, can be assured that the method of counting must have been either found here amongst the Celts or brought over by the Norsemen themselves. These numerals are spoken of as 'hinyaritic.' They certainly are found to have a remarkable likeness to Welsh and Breton

numerals, and the North American Indians used apparently similar numerals for sheep scoring.

We have to thank Mr. Ellwood of Torver for exhaustive research on this matter. But he has said nothing to shake my belief, knowing as I do that these numerals are found in Lincolnshire and among the North American Indians, that they were originally brought by Vikings to our shores and by the Vikings to the shores of Vineland, as they called America. Whatever be the origin, and they may of course have come from the Asian cradle of the Aryan race, it is remarkable how the various dales appear to have traditionally altered these numerals. The following are what were in use in Borrowdale:

1. Yan.	8. Hovera.	15. Bumfit.
2. Tyan.	9. Dovera.	16. Yan-a-bumfit.
3. Tethera.	10. Dick.	17. Tyan-a-bumfit.
4. Methera.	11. Yan-a-dick.	18. Tethera-a-bumfit.
5. Pimp.	12. Tyan-a-dick.	19. Methera-a-bumfit.
6. Sethera.	13. Tethera-a-dick.	20. Giggot.
7. Lethera.	14. Methera-a-dick.	

But when we go to Westmoreland, we find 'teddera' and 'meddera' were used instead of 'tethera' and 'methera,' and the word 'mimph' was used for fifteen and not 'bumfit.' In Eskdale, sethera, lethera, hovera, dovera, dick, became seckera,

leckera, hofa, lofa, dec. In another dale, hovera, dovera were changed to hata, slata.

I have never been able to find that these numerals have been used by shepherds of our own time. The oldest men I have spoken with could only say that their fathers told them that their grandfathers always counted that way. One cannot help hoping that this old traditional way of counting may be held in mind. It is a link with a very ancient past, and we who dwell in the land of the shepherd must view with regret any passing into oblivion of shepherd customs or shepherd speech.

NOTE, PAGE 48.—There is a tradition in Cumberland that the original Herdwicks came ashore from a wreck at the time of the Armada. Sheep may so have come ashore, but I am persuaded that the Herdwick is a northern and not a southern breed, and were imported at a time long anterior to Elizabethan days.

NOTE, PAGE 58.—Some shepherds instead of tar-plaster and wadding, place a threepenny-bit or sixpenny-bit over the incision in the skull, and put the plaster above that, but the bone rapidly grows together. A curious superstition exists that 'sturdied' sheep are not fit for an operation until the moon is full. The bone of the skull is said to soften at that time.

NOTE, PAGE 69.—The memory of fell shepherds for the faces of their sheep has a far inheritance. In the *Landnamabok* of Iceland, translated by Mr. Ellwood of Torver, an instance of it is noted, and the translator, in a footnote, quotes an example that had come to his notice of a shepherd in his district who recognised by their faces alone, in a flock twenty miles away, some sheep that had been stolen from his heaf, and this notwithstanding that the sheep had been shorn and their lug marks obliterated. He substantiated his claim to them in a court of law.

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AN APRIL WALK TO WESTMORELAND.

I HAVE just come in from a wonderful walk through Lancashire to Westmoreland. The Easter moon has risen above the hills, and the road I have left shines almost as white beneath it as the roads from the Carrara quarries. The thrushes have only just ceased their last song, and the stars are only now beginning their gradual muster above the crest of Silverhow, while the humbler stars of happy household lights shine through the purple dusk of Grasmere vale.

We had been to see the daffodils in the Duddon valley, and it was four o'clock in the afternoon of a glorious April day that we found ourselves at the little terminal station above the lake of the Town of Thor. No one who passes from the Coniston station forgets the beauty of the great Scotch fir which stands out dark against the grey shales of the neighbouring hills, but to-day even its beauty seemed momentarily forgotten in the

peep of the far-off pink-grey range of Ill-bel, the delicate blue of the Fairfield range, and the nearer purples and browns of the Yewdale crags seen above the pleasant meadows and the as yet almost leafless woodlands that lie between Coniston and Yewdale Crag.

We were bound for Tilberthwaite and Holme Ground. Away to the south-east, shone above the mere, the one-time home of him who loved that Tilberthwaite gorge almost with a passion—John Ruskin—and passing through the village by the little museum which holds his work in memory, we could not help feeling that he was by our side as we paused where the Yewdale beck comes babbling to the road bank; for of all the streams in the valley this was his favourite, and many a time had he taken boat across the lake from Brantwood and wandered to this 'dub' to watch the shadows in the pool, and know how the light was splintered, how the mosses grew, how the troutlets dimpled the shallows, or the water-ouzel shot by.

But as one stood to gaze, his shadow passed from sight, and only the grave with the storied cross above it by the deodars in the churchyard, seemed to assert itself.

We went forward with sense of loss, but the chiff-

chaff shook its ecstasy from the tops of the trees upon our heads, and here and there the new-born lambs gambolled as if to make pleasure for us. Every branch of oak and sycamore seemed swelling to the leaf. The hazel wands with their dull catkins still upon them were starred with tiny leaf-buds, the tresses of the birch trees hung out their flowers, through the rusty fern dog's-mercury shone with vivid emerald, while here and there, as if this vivid green had infected the larch-tree company near by with desire of rivalry, though all the rest of the wood was bronze and leafless, a tress of tender emerald hung glittering in the sunlight. A sense of life was in the air—a sense of larger light was on the stream and in the wood, but all along the valley one voice seemed silent—the best interpreter of this beauty of the spring had passed away for ever.

Where the road turns from the Yewdale Farm and leaves the white road that gleams upward to the Tilberthwaite Gorge, we asked our way of a dalesman to Holme Ground.

'Oh! you'll not can miss that, any way, you mud just turn off to t' left at t' gate by t' farm and gang o'er Shepherd's Brig and follow t'road to t'left. You'll not can miss it, I'se warrant ye.'

As I turned out of the road I caught sight

of the strange yew tree chessmen that the dale topiarian of old time first cut into shape and all successors in that ancient farm have felt themselves in duty bound to clip each year to constant shapeliness. I had not passed that way for twenty years. The farm and its mighty sycamore and quaint yew trees did not appear to have felt the touch of time, and certain of a kindly greeting I was sore tempted to enter its hospitable doors and ask for tea, but my companion would have none of it.

'No, no, we have got to get to Grasmere before nightfall. I have to take you over three intervening heights and two valleys; let us push on to Holme Ground, there I am sure we can find rest and all the refreshment that heart can desire.'

But heart desired refreshment then and there, and we got it, for we sat on Shepherd's Bridge and heard the buzzard mewing overhead and saw the sunlight and shadow fall upon those wonderful crags which always to the Eastern traveller who has passed down the plain of Er Rahah to Jebel Musa, must be a reminder in miniature of the rugged bastions of Sinai,—the Mount of Horeb which could be touched.

We looked in vain for the wild goats which are still said to people these rocky solitudes, and up

along the pleasant road to the west of Yewdale Crag, with the beck upon our left, we went—filled with delight at the beauty of the Tilberthwaite vale, the bronze larch woods, and the blue green Scotch firs ahead of us—hearing the lapse of the stream below us, and ever and anon the quarry thunder, 'flapped from left to right,' that I always think Tennyson listened to in the days when he wandered hither with his bride from Tent Lodge in 1850.

Above us, clear against the glowing sky, the shadowy forms of Wetherlam and the Carrs rose up in the west, and turning our backs upon them we ascended by the old road that led towards the quarries and the moorland of Holme Ground. A choice of route now offered to us in our quest for five o'clock tea, for we might either continue along the old road or turn off by a newer road through the larches on our left. We clung to the old road for the sake of 'auld lang syne,' and were rewarded by the fine view to the north-west above the open meadows and gleaming road that led to the Holme Ground Farm.

The little wicket-gate gave entrance to a tiny patch of garden ground gay with daffodils and primroses, and its comfortable seat beneath the old yew, and welcomed at the door by the daughter

of the house, we were ushered into a tiny parlour and rested while tea was prepared for us.

Half-an-hour was soon gone, and the deepening glow in the western sky bade us remember we must push on if Grasmere was to be reached before nightfall. Up the road by the quarry cottages, at whose doors the men just returned from labour were resting, and on through an archway made by the mountains of débris, we found a winding path through wood and meadow to the lower quarry, and descending by a long stairway in the débris which the quarrymen had made, dropped down to the main road of the Tilberthwaite valley, and so to the old ford and more modern footbridge which leads to the hamlet of Little Langdale. Right glad were we to have visited this quarry sanctuary. All round us the larch forest was broken by vast grey terraces, down which, from time to time, still rattled the débris of the quarry toil, and much as Wordsworth may have written down the larch in his day as a newcome stranger whose ordered ranks he could not away with, it is quite certain, if he could have stood with us to-day in Tilberthwaite, he would have thanked the larch with all his heart for its kindly screening of the cruel quarry scars in that beautiful amphitheatre. Yet, after all, it was something to

be thankful for that the slate industry was centred in this valley, and that, except in the further Langdale, the dales of Westmoreland were as yet unhurt and undisfigured by the slate merchant.

We crossed the wooden bridge and climbed up by the quaintly perched little hamlet, towards the main road by which the coaches come from Colwith to Blea Tarn, and were soon standing at a point of view that gave us sight of Little Langdale Tarn.

There are few less interesting sheets of water in the Lake District. Too small to be a lake, too large to be a tarn, it lies in a featureless hollow—but full fed as it is from the slopes of Wrynose and the coves of Wetherlam, we are bound to remember that not only is it one of the chief reservoirs of the beautiful river Brathay, but gives us also the picturesque Colwith Force, and with the help of Elterwater swells the sound and magnifies the tumult of Skelwith Falls.

We turned our face to the north-east and made our way to Dale End Farm upon the slope of Lingmoor Fell, to pass over the 'col' between Hackett and Lingmoor. Those three magnificent yew trees were probably planted by order of Henry VIII. that the Dale End farmer might cut his own stout bows and be ready for a call to the 'marches.'

The steading had perished, by which they were first planted, but there was such loyalty in their blood that these old fellows still kept watch and ward, and were unwilling till another king should give command to cease their proffered service. We left these lonely sentinels on the hillside and gained the open moor, and but for the knowledge that another vale had to be crossed, and another range had to be surmounted before Grasmere came in sight, we should have been well content to linger here.

The evening light in heaven beyond the Langdale Pikes warned us that day was closing in, but Wetherlam and Coniston Old Man in the south rose up in such purple majesty and gained such mystery withal from the haze that hung about their lower skirts, that we doubted if from any point in all the district the hills at eventide could seem more fair.

There were other wanderers, other far-farers than ourselves, on the moor. I heard a sharp Chack! chack! and the little 'white rump'—as the Anglo-Saxons called him, the 'wheatear' as we call him to-day—glanced into being. Not yet the swallow had come; not yet had the cuckoo been heard; but we had left the chiff-chaff singing in the Yewdale larches, and the wheatear had evidently

come to bear him company. It was not the first time that, on the same day on which I had first heard in the dales the chiff-chaff's ecstasy, I had been delighted by the glancing and the quaint harsh note of this sprightly little lake-land visitor.

We descended now swiftly into the great Langdale valley. The woodland road was so steep as to make us wonder how it was possible that horse-kind could ever drag wheels up it, yet there was plenty of evidence that the farmer's cart and the quarry cart passed that way.

Two memories of Birch Hill abide with me. One is the most magnificent Scotch fir I have seen in the whole lake country. Why is it that we do not plant the Scotch fir more when we want to make a gift to artists for all time? Does the Scotch fir ever seem out of place when he is full grown? Does he not all the year through add enchantment of colour and form to the scene he dignifies? And yet, perhaps, he is never seen fairer than in early April, when the first buds are on the birch and the first green tresses on the larch, and his blue-green head has all its beauty emphasised by the delicate green of the wooded fell behind him.

The other memory is that of Elterwater as a dusky jewel shining in the grey-green meadows

beneath us on the right, whilst the woods of Hackett and of the hill which we were descending seem to take the valley in their purple arms.

Right opposite us the range of Silverhow was topped by the heights of Fairfield, and the Grisedale Gap, full of silver light, made darker the purple of the twilit hills. We descended into the valley, crossed the Brathay, and passing through the village of Elterwater could not help stopping to watch the children at their play. A passion for skipping seems to possess the children of this countryside in April.

Making our way across the common and up the slope towards Hunting-Stile, again we paused. The Langdale Pikes loomed grandly through the gathering mist of eventide, and in the silence we heard the children calling and the river singing a sweet undersong as it streamed along the vale.

It was pleasant to weary feet to make the short cuts across the soft fellside turf, till far up the breast of the hill we struck the main road to High Close, and after going a hundred yards or so, we turned off, with the telegraph poles for guide, to make our way over the fell-top to Grasmere, by what is locally known as the 'old corpse road.' The sweet gale scent was in the air, and here and there gorse flowers still glimmered as we went. The

children's voices died away, a single clink of the hammer at a forge in far-off Langdale was the only thing that told of life and labour. It was the way of peace, and one could not help remembering how many a time there had been borne up this slope the bodies of those who had ceased from labour and were being carried to their last long sleep in the old churchyard beside the stream in the Grasmere valley.

We reached the crest, gazed back for a moment on the far-off glimmer of Windermere in the south, and set our faces to the north. Then in a moment such a scene broke upon us as made us forget all the fatigue of the long walk, and feel that at last, indeed, we had gained the vale of rest.

Deep below us, and deeper for the blue evening shade, lay in absolute calm and silence the dark lake and its darker island. In absolute calm and silence lifted the great hills around it to heaven. Far off, like tiny glow-worms, a few village lights told us that in that sanctuary of repose was life of human kind. An owl hooted from a wood close by, and the voice of a solitary sheep was heard far up the fell, then all was hushed. These voices had only emphasised the silence upon which no other sound intruded.

We dropped quickly down by turf zigzag, not

unaccompanied now for the moon had risen and our shadows went with us, and passing through the gate into the wood, we followed along the old track and joined again the main road from Red Bank, just where in old days, for a belated traveller, stood the welcome of a little hostelry. The moonlight was white upon the water, and the ripple of the evening air was in the reeds, as we turned from the lake up by the brook that babbled welcome to us to lead us to our home, and ere we passed beneath the roof-tree we saw high up above the jet-black fir, the bright-eyed 'Charioteer.'

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SEXTON JOE.

Visitors to the Lake Country during the last quarter of the last century will remember Joe Birkett, the cheery-faced old caretaker at Crosthwaite Church, the sexton and 'fidus Achates' of all who wished to know about the history of that old Church of St. Kentigern. They were as much amused generally with his Cumberland 'crack' as they were by his pride in the church of which he was guardian. To any question they asked pertaining to the officers or management of the church, or to the organ or bells, they would generally get the one answer that there was 'nivver nea betther in t' whoale countryside.' And his praise used to be given in the same unstinted way to the church cat and the parson's sermons.

The Americans were especially pleased with him: the dialect bothered them. They would say afterwards that he was 'just a lovely man, and

spoke an entirely new language, and it was worth while coming across the Atlantic to see a man whose sister had been Southey's servant,' etc.

But it was to 'them furreners from Meriky' that Joe or 'Auld Joe' or 'Chuch Joe,' as he was familiarly called in the Keswick vale, most unfolded himself. The old fellow's eye never glistened so much as when he had someone to 'crack on wi' as was terble partial to auld times.' Then he would let himself go.

Born at Wythburn in the days when those frequent visits of the Grasmere and Keswick poets to their favourite trysting-place, the Rock of Names, was still fresh in mind, and living as he did at the little cottage clad in cotoneaster by the wayside nearest to that Rock of Names—cottage whose site has gone beneath the flood at the dictates of a thirsty Manchester, it was but likely he should grow up with a kind of hero-worship for the poets' personalities, and that though he never read a line of their verse, he should have his eyes open if they crossed his path.

'Terble solemn man was Mr. Wudsworth noo, and a girt voice an aw. A distant man varra,' that was old Joe's reminiscence of William Wordsworth. Of Hartley Coleridge, whom he would proudly say 'was cursened in oor font,' he had

the usual daleside recollections flattering enough to Hartley's geniality, not always so much so to his sobriety.

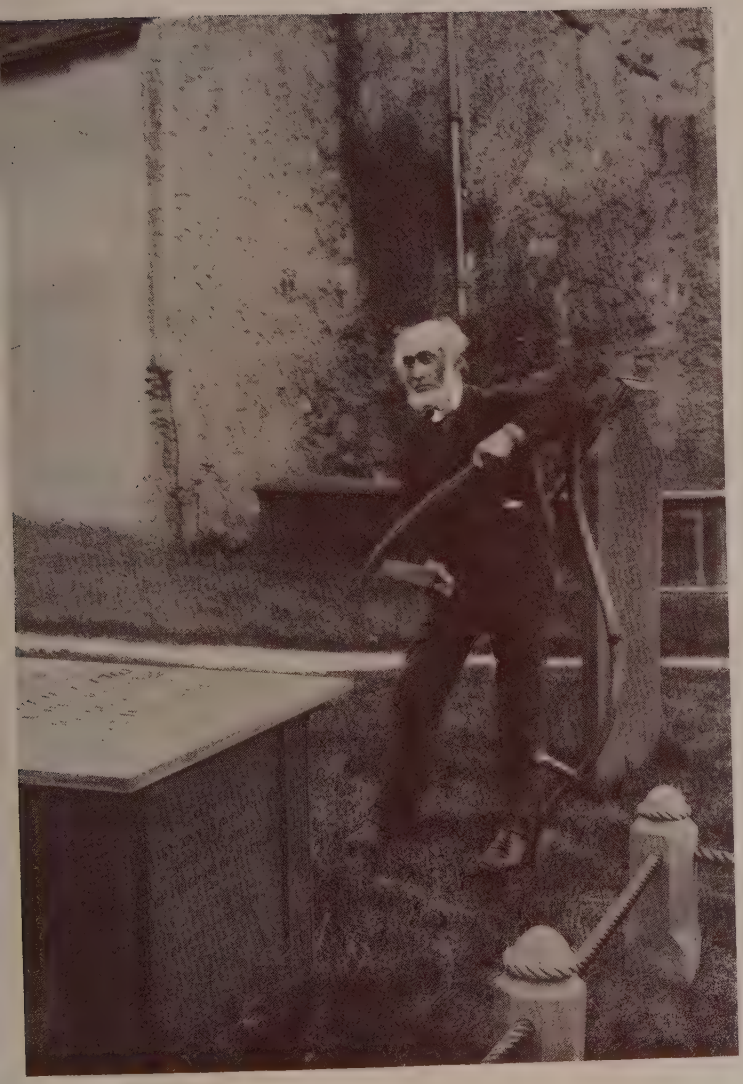
There was one thing that Joe could not do with, and that was that a man should take more than was good for him. He had been in all companies, but the old fellow could honestly say that no one had ever seen him the worse for liquor in his life, and he was much inclined to be hard upon Hartley. Who can wonder? The old man had dug many graves that need not have been dug, and he would turn away sadly from his last offices, and say, 'Well, he wasn't his oan best friend; he just wasted hissel like a deal mair o' fwok.'

It was not always an easy task that this faithful old sexton had to perform. Part of the churchyard, known as 't' auld grund,' was so packed with the dead that for sanitary purposes graves in that part could not be opened even at the expressed wishes of members of a family who much desired that their dust should mingle with the dust of their ancestors. I remember well Joe saying 'It was a terble teptious job suiting folk as wanted to lig whoare they cudn't.' 'Theer's Miss So-and-so bin doon here and gaan on ivver so and gien me sic a blackin' as never was, becos I telt her I cudn't

git her intil t' auld grund noa-ways, and I telt her she mud just lig in t' new grund and mud be weel content, an aw, for it was a deal sweeter.' 'And,' added old Joe, 'theer's nowt so queer as folk, specially wick uns.' 'But,' said I, 'Miss So-and-so is not a "wick" un, she's dead—she never came down to see you, I am sure.' 'Well, well,' replied Joe, 'but relashuns coomed.' It was plain that the sexton had, when he argued with 'depitashun,' visualised the indignant deceased, and had thought of her as still walking the earth and arguing as to where her ashes should be laid.

But there were two dwellers in the valley to whose memories he was always true—one the quaint old Peninsular War veteran, Sir John Woodford, whose particular serving man he had himself been, and Robert Southey. He would point to Sir John's grave and say with a chuckle: 'Ah's glad we've got him theer. Eh, but he war a good master if ivver theer war yan noo,' and then would fall into queer stories of the 'tithe cow' which was destrained upon and sold by auction every year and bought in by its owner to pay the parson's tithe.

But of Robert Southey, with whose household, through one of his sisters being in service there, he seemed to have some intimate knowledge, he



SEXTON JOE

was never tired of talking. 'Such a particlar kind man was Mr. Southey noo, and always so fond of the bairns. Nivver went out except in his clogs, and a brown lappetted cwoat and a cap with a neb till it, and nivver was seen upon t' rwoads wi'out a beuk in his hand'; and he would add: 'he hes t' beuk in hand upon t' monument sista, and sec a heed o' hair as nivver was. Ah doan't suppoase ivver man o' his years wur laid in this yard wi' sec a heed o' hair.' But the conclusion of the matter was that he was 't' most particler kind gentleman as ivver cud be, and terble fond o' t' chuch they do saay.'

One other notable worthy hereabout he delighted to speak of, for Joe had been a shepherd on the fells, and keen running hunter in his younger days. He would talk by the hour of the wonderful John Peel and his laal pony—'John Peel, him as leeved at "Calld-beck," back o' Skidda'—and of 'his hounds and his horn in the morning.' Such stories he would tell of the doings of John Peel's days and the great greyhound foxes of old time, of runs that went on all through the day and all through the night, with a kill mayhap next day at noon.

I confess as I listened I used to think that the origin of the 'whish hounds' and witch-dogs of Celtic lore might easily have been born again in

our Cumberland valleys, if others heard as old Joe heard 't' hounds gaan whoale neet through.'

But it was of all things most interesting to get old Joe on to 'auld-fashint doings in t' daales' when he was a boy. What he did not know his old mother had 'telt' him, and he himself could remember such things as the 'bride wain' from Crosthwaite Church; could recall as a lad at Wythburn, looking out to see whose pony won the race of eight miles from the church door; and could tell of the fiddler's parties and the ribands stuck in the fiddler's hat by those who wished this or that tune at the 'merry-neet.' He could remember going, on Christmas Eve with the fiddler, the complete round of the dale, to call out names, to wish good cheer and to play the favourite tune, and had as a boy oft carried his mother's spinning-wheel to the spinning-wheel party at a neighbour's house to pass the time in the good old friendly days when folk could meet without ill-natured gossip and have a 'gay good spin.'

Standing near the church porch, sharpening his scythe, the hale and hearty old man looked the very embodiment of Father Time, and it seemed as if Time, that only fears the Pyramids, feared Joe.

But the Crosthwaite Sexton, full of his old-world memories and full of years, for he was in

his eighty-sixth year when he died, went at last. We shall not see his like again. The ringers on the Sunday following his funeral, which was January 8, 1901, at their own request, rang a muffled peal, and all the congregation rose to their feet as they heard the organ wail out its Dead March in honour of faithful old Joe.

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AN EVENING WALK IN WYTHOP.

Our legislators are busy trying to save daylight for the people by some arrangement of the working hours by which we shall begin the day earlier and go to bed earlier also. But, as far as lengthening daylight goes, workers in the English Lake District think—at anyrate in May and June—that they have enough of it. Yesterday the sun shone, by the sun gauge at the Crosthwaite Elementary School, for fourteen and a half hours, and to-day is just such another day.

One thinks of Heaven as a place where there will be no night, and one wonders why people do not make a greater effort and find their heaven on earth by coming to the Lake District in the merry month of May. We travel abroad, some of us who are fond of flowers, to Italy and Switzerland at this time of year, but we miss the joy of the long-lighted eventides which is the fortunate lot of those who stay at home in Cumberland. The

witchery of the evenings such as a fair May-tide brings us, is by reason of the lengthened gloaming, an experience which Southerners can know nothing of.

In this matter the Keswick vale is much favoured, for we can wander through cool woods in perfect shade, whilst the whole of the eastern side of the valley is glorious in full sunshine, and if one delights in flower life and fern life, in the scent of larch woods and the song of birds, I know nothing more beautiful than such a walk as we took last evening.

Leaving Keswick by the 6.30 train one passed through the rich meadows and along by the rippling lake of Broadwater towards Bassenthwaite station. The last mile and a half of the journey was made beautiful to the eye by the carpeting of the railway cuttings and banks with such wealth of primroses as I had never yet seen. At seven o'clock I began the homeward walk of eight miles through the Wythop woods. On my left rose up the ancient 'dun,' or fort, with its triple rampart and flat green summit that the Britons in old time knew, and the voices of other warriors were in my ears as I climbed its height, for away to the south lay Caermote, where once the Romans brought their invalid soldiers for rest and cure. Just over the

hill to the south-west lay Embleton, which the Vikings knew, who ran their boats ashore in the 'wyke' at my feet, and whose chieftains, if we may judge from the magnificent sword now in the British Museum, were men who cared for Art as well as War.

We were soon in full shadow, for though the herons that sailed upward flashed into silver as they met the western light above the Wythop hill as they floated downward to their nests, they went dead grey and dark to their sunless youngsters. Walking half a mile in this quiet shade we gained the railway embankment, and lay full stretched upon a primrose-broidered couch for sheer excess of joy in the tender fragrance and luxuriant beauty of the flowers.

It was a case of primroses, primroses all the way, for every child that we met bicycling back towards Cockermouth bore on the handle-bar great posies of the primrose spoil; and as we gazed up the sloping woodland, we could see the happy people bending over the flowers and crying to one another of their new-found glories.

The brackens had not yet unfolded their wings on the tall unplumed stalks in the glades, but at my side the male ferns had uncoiled their bronze crooks and fledged themselves in fullest green,

and the dainty, sweet-scented mountain-fern of silk and silver would, ere another evening came, stand up in fullest beauty.

A tempting woodland 'ride' led towards the top of the Wythop Fell by easy slope, and as one wandered up it blue-bells were on our left and primroses sparkled everywhere, while now and again as we gazed downward we saw what appeared to be patches of driven snow, the white garlic of the woodland. The strong scent of this beautiful flower would prevent any but an Italian from gathering it, but housewives who need a beautiful table decoration need have no fear of being troubled by its pungent scent if only they will place it in water over-night, in the open air, and not use it in the house until the morning.

The joy of this long upward walk through the new-leaved woodland lay not so much in the fragrant scent of birch and larch, or the murmur of the tasselled sycamores that gave their honey to the tireless bees,—not so much in the fern life and the primrose life, as in the contrast between the shadow upon it and the marvellous sunlight, seen at every opening, that flooded the lake and lay upon the whole mass of mighty Skiddaw beyond.

There was not a cloud in heaven, and the great mountain seemed with every moment to take to

itself a fuller gift of light. The fresh buds of the bracken upon its slopes were already subduing the bronze of its winter coat into finest coral pink, and this, with the lilac shales on Carlside and the brown of the heather, produced a harmony of tone that was in wonderful contrast with the vivid greens of the larch-tree belts and the gorgeous Maytide meadows at its foot.

A cool wind came from the south and sent the waters of Bassenthwaite in curving ripples to the shore at our feet, and the sound of the lapping of the water took me in thought to that day when Alfred Tennyson with his friend Fitzgerald wandered on the opposite shore through the Mire-house meads, and as he recast and re-wrote his 'Morte D'Arthur,' 'pacing the dewy pastures lost in thought,' heard the same sound and gave it immortality of verse.

Having gained the height, the woodland 'ride' descended towards the main road, and suddenly, about three-quarters of the way down, the trees gave way on either side, and such a view of the Crosthwaite vale, with the whole range of Helvellyn above Castlerigg to the south-east and the hills of Newlands and Cat-Bels to the south-west and the Borrowdale ranges to the south, were open to one, all laid in the full mellow evening light, as

made one pause and wonder; for as we gazed we could see above Helvellyn a rosy flush in the air that trembled into blue at the zenith. This rosy flush was reflected upon the long wave of the mountain ridge, and made it burn as though with fire. The cattle gleamed in the pasture, the birds still sang as though the day was young, but I knew that that beginning of the afterglow meant that the sun was far westering.

Still Skiddaw stood in amplest majesty of light, and one would have been forgiven for supposing it was mid-day. Down now to the quiet milky-white road we went, and so through cool shadow for three miles; Barf lifting itself on our right hand, its black shale mixed with bilberry, and the woods on Lord's Seat, for all their shadow, freshly green. Then suddenly, as the clock by the way-side pointed to nine, Skiddaw went through its change. The great mountain mass became smitten with unearthly pallor, and we knew the sun had sunk beneath the sea.

Still the birds sang: they knew better than I did that the glory of the day was not ended. Slowly the flush upon Helvellyn deepened into rose, slowly the dull pallor of Skiddaw turned to ruddy gold, and all the beauty of an Alpine afterglow filled the air. Meanwhile Bassenthwaite lay

like white silver in the vale, and the whole of the sky between Wythop and Uldale grew into such deep orange as I had not seen since I left the banks of Nile.

We found ourselves constantly brought to a standstill to gaze upward. The water runnels in the meadows flushed with gold and silver, the trees felt the glory of the west and became green gold, the very road we walked on, just now so white and cool, seemed to be lit and warm with a strange new light, the stitchwort sparkled in the hedge, the rabbits lay feeding in the quiet meadows with coats of ruddy golden-brown. We paused at a friend's house in Thornthwaite for rest, and when after supper we resumed the homeward walk the afterglow had faded from the hills, and the birds were at last silent; only the sound of the corncrake filled the air, and low in the west the planet Venus burned, more sun than star.

Passing through Portinscale, I leant upon the Derwent bridge and saw the planet shine in the water, nearly as large, it seemed as a little moon. But still so brightly burned the light in the north-west heaven that no stars other than the planet were visible. Skiddaw stood up almost jet black against the glow; the Wythop woods and Barf were purple dark. High at the zenith faintly

showed the Plow, and Cassiopeia's Chair was dimly visible.

It was eleven o'clock ere I gazed my last upon the gleaming river and the Crosthwaite meadows, and still the daylight had not died in heaven, and the western stars were still forbid to shine.

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UP FAIRFIELD, IN JUNE.

THERE are few mountain heights in the Grasmere neighbourhood that seem to attract the ordinary tourist less than Fairfield, but there are few more rewarding. The very name of Fairfield—the sheep fell—has an attraction for most of us who remember how the Norsemen came hither at the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century and have left behind them permanent traces of their occupation, not only in the blue eyes of the children, the fine faces of the women, the long arms and lank legs of the men, but in the Herdwick sheep which they probably brought with them from their snowy highlands.

And Fairfield is dear, not only to those who care about Norse tradition, but to those who are fain to look back to an earlier time when the Briton held his 'dun,' or 'fort,' hereabout, as the place-names of Dunmail Raise and Dunna-beck testify; for here on one of the spurs of Fairfield

that dominates the Grasmere vale, an eminence which Wordsworth, when he was at Dove Cottage, knew was 'the last to parley with the setting sun,' is Stone Arthur, and those who have never seen at sunset time the rocks shine out into semblance of a kingly face, may still climb to this Arthur's seat of the Lake country and dream of the Holy Grail and the days of Arthur's Table Round.

It was in the first week of June, when the buttercups were just beginning to yellow the vale, when the yew and the spruce were tufted with gold, and the laburnum and rhododendron made each garden that one passed more beautiful than the last, when the scent of the hawthorn was fragrant in the air, and the cuckoo's voice clear from the fell, that we turned aside from the main road near the Swan Inn, and passing by Ben Place, beloved of Edward Thring, were soon in the delightful company of the beck that Wordsworth's shepherd Michael knew of old.

Out of shadow into the sun, over boulders mossy and boulders green as chrysolite the cool waters babbled and talked of the upland height from which they had come. As we neared the out-gang to the fell its voice was lost in other babblement, for a modern Michael was taking his

lambs that had been 'popped' and 'lug'-marked (earmarked) up to the fells, and what with the crying of lambs, and the bleating of mothers, and the barking of dogs, while the shout of the shepherd kept rising above the chorus, all other sound of the beck was lost.

We were sorely tempted to cross the beck and pass up on the right to Michael's fold by the pathway beneath Buthar Crags, and thence crossing the beck beyond the broken fold, to zigzag up the southern slope of Stone Arthur; but my friend persisted that though the climb was steeper at the first, if we entered the out-gang on the left of the beck, we should find when we passed out on to the intake and skirted the shoulder of the hill that the ascent would be comparatively easy; so up we went by the path the shepherds' feet had worn, and were soon rewarded by a fair view of the Grasmere vale that, new-fledged with trees, vivid sycamore, green-gold oak, and snowy hawthorns, seemed a woodland paradise.

Visitors who come from Cumberland and the north can never fail to note the comparative abundance of woodland growth that adds such charm to Westmoreland, and I, who thought I knew the Grasmere valley well, had seemed to have forgotten how much of its beauty it owed to

its forest trees as seen in leafy plenitude and June-tide sun.

No one who has ever gazed up to Stone Arthur from the vale but must remember how the walls embroider its slope, and how on the southern end of a great square patch the wall of another intake further to the south runs almost to touching it, then, forming a V-shape or funnel-shape, falls to the meadows and the farms below, but the stranger does not realise how much of thought has gone to the making of those walls and that funnel, and how shepherd and shepherd dogs know well that, if they sweep the upper fell, flocks will converge upon this funnel mouth and so pour themselves down to the farm-steading without the possibility of straying.

What strikes one to-day is the comparative absence of sheep upon the pastures ; in a week or two's time they will have returned to their old haunts. Those quaint pockmarks underneath Heron Pike and between the skyline and Michael's fold are proofs of sheep pasturage, they are the resting-places of sheep who scoop out these little terraces on the fellside that they may rest in shadow when the sun beats fiercely.

As one emerges beyond the intakes on to the shoulder beneath Stone Arthur one realises why it

is that so suddenly at the end of May and beginning of June, the mountain side, so russet at the beginning of May, so coral pink at the end of May, has become comparatively colourless ; for the bracken, whose withered stalks lie wind-crushed upon the ground, is laced through and through with the up-standing stalks of the new growth, and the tree stems of this miniature forest have hidden from sight the colouring mesh-work of the old dead fern. The bracken growth is itself a marvel, for the head of the fern, buried in the ground in the first few weeks of its new growth, seems to be able to feed the fern stem almost as much as the root does, and one sees large hoops of golden green swelling from day to day into stoutness, till suddenly a live creature seems to pull its head out of the ground, opening little seraph wings on either side the head, and, straightening itself out, stand up a miniature tree without side branches but plumed at the top ; and so, having shot up to a height of a couple of feet on the high fell, to wait till the upper branches spread themselves out in fan-like beauty, silver green in certain lights, and darkening and keeping cool the grass beneath for the joy of the stag's horn moss and comfort to the mouths of the Herdwick sheep.

It was rather hard going plodding backwards

and forwards through the tussock grass and bunches of rush that had already lengthened themselves out to puzzle the feet of the climber, but in an hour's time from the Swan Inn we had won rocky ledges and lichened outcrop of Stone Arthur, and were able to cool our hands in the miniature water pools that the rain of last night had filled to the brim on its utmost top. We were able from this height to see Easedale Tarn, Blelham Tarn, near Wray, and a faint glimmer of Esthwaite Water. Wetherlam and Grey Friars rose grandly above Lingmoor, and the beauty of near and far Easedale and the Langdale Pikes veiled in tenderest sunshine and mist is not easily forgotten. Four buzzards were circling backwards and forwards in a majestic kind of airy dance above us, the sound of their mewing giving a weird melancholy to the whole heaven. Near us, in contrast to their sadness, the mountain twites filled the air with merriment.

We were ascending towards Great Rigg, and though it took us another hour to reach it the journey seemed much shorter by reason of the unevenness of the ground—now rising, now falling. The tussock grass became shorter, the air lighter and brisker, and we felt the mountain cool upon our faces. The treelessness of Fairfield, the flower-

lessness of Fairfield struck us. On any Alpine height we should have been at this time of year treading on ground enamelled with various hues. Here was no fragrance except of crushed fern, and though this scent on our Westmoreland hills makes some amends for the absence of the aromatic scent of the Alpine herbage, one misses sadly the flower life which makes an Alpine walk so full of charm.

In an hour's time from Stone Arthur we reached Great Rigg, and were able to see, glimmering through the far-off haze to the south, not only the lakes of Coniston and Esthwaite and the shining crescent of Windermere, but the estuaries of Morecambe Bay, these latter soon withdrawn behind a curtain of violet mist that hung from some invisible bar in heaven above which shone gold gleaming cloudlets from east to west. But the feature of the view from Great Rigg was the piling of the hill masses out west, Bowfell, Scafell, the Gable, Pillar, the Haystacks and the Grasmoor Range. Grasmere was entirely hidden from view, and Rydal Water had never been seen during the whole walk. Turning our eyes to the north the Dolly Wagon Pike with its faint zigzag above the Grisedale Tarn, shone green and gold in the sunlight, while the near view as we looked to the west

was the gulf of Rydal Head and its great ruddy amphitheatre of wind-swept herblessness.

It is impossible to understand the force of our south-western gales in the Lake Country till one stands on such an eminence as Great Rigg, and sees how these winds have torn the herbage from the fell tops, combed the summit with ridge and furrow and, hurtling against the circling walls of Rydal Head, have swept it bare of any living thing. Down below us in this Rydal vale the stream coiled like a serpent to the south-west and lost itself among the Rydal woods.

Visitors who pass along the road from Ambleside to Rydal may be pardoned if they think the Rydal Forest extends into the heart of the hills, but those who stand on Fairfield top know better. They know that from Rydal Head to the beginning of the trees in Rydal Park they would have to walk for a couple of miles without tree or bush-kind of any sort to bear them company.

The ravens croaked overhead ; the only other sound in the air was the gentle palpitation of the beck coiled in the gulf beneath us, to find full voice at the Rydal Falls.

Descending the close turf-covered slope of the great ridge, we reascended towards Fairfield summit, and in half an hour's time had gained our

goal. Here again it was quite clear that the battle of the winds was constantly being fought. Meeting as they would, they drew from the east, up Grisedale and Deepdale, they left the mark of their battle-ground in a stony wilderness, that, as one gazed from a distance, seemed like the bleached bones of giant mammoths who had here laid down to die. Three cairns had been built in time past at various places on this fell summit, and from any or all of them very rememberable were the views we gained. The interest of the scene from Fairfield summit lay in the remarkable crags that seemed to be black basalt powdered with green, on the southern side of Deepdale.

A sparrowhawk swung out from the crags, and the swifts screamed at us while we watched him. St. Sunday Crag itself cannot be viewed to finer advantage than from here, and the little Cofa Pike, like a watch-tower guarding the portcullis, was a remarkable feature in the near foreground.

One was sorely tempted to climb Cofa and drop down upon the narrow neck that divides Fairfield from St. Sunday Crag—for St. Sunday Crag is said to be one of the few mountain heights that can boast remarkable flowers and plant growth—but we contented ourselves with the marvellous beauty of the colouring of the red

bastions of Helvellyn as they circled round to Catchedecam, with the ebon-blue water patch of Grisedale Tarn in the hollow. With memories of Faber's love of that upland lake, and of Wordsworth's last farewell to his sailor brother on the fell beside the tarn, we turned our faces from the battle-ground of the winds to Great Rigg, but not before we had wondered at the piling up of the gleaming cloud masses above the long range of High Street to the west, and the sparkling of the jewel of Angle Tarn between Hartsop Dod and the Kidsty Pike.

As we ascended we had dreamed of Arthur and his British chieftains of old; as we descended we thought of the Romans who had dispossessed them; for no one can ever gaze on the great blue wall of High Street to the west without being reminded that along that sky line tramped the Roman legionaries and jingled the Roman cars. They brought their eagles to a land where the bird of Jove remained for centuries after they had passed away. They little thought that the time would come when Rome should be forgotten, and the British eagle be remembered; but we to-day, descending from Fairfield summit by way of the Great Rigg to gain Nab Scar, passed Heron Pike, know well that that name Heron Pike is but a

corruption for Ern Pike, the home of the British eagle. He, too, has passed away, but the place-name of this mountain eyrie remains.

We could not leave the Great Rigg on our return journey without long gazing at the astounding view of Windermere revealed therefrom, and again noting how full of woodland the Lancashire lake country seems to be when in contrast with the comparative treelessness of the Cumberland lake district.

Passing Heron Pike with the reservoir between us and Buthar Crags gleaming like a silver brooch on the upland, it was impossible to help pausing to remember how the hollow in the hill beneath us was vocal still with the story of shepherd life; for down below us dimly seen lay the remains of Michael's Fold, and as we looked the sound of sheep dogs and shepherds' voices came up through the silent air to tell us that other Michaels were still at their appointed task, and that the tending of sheep was still calling out the best in men, in character and patience, love and duty.

Beyond Heron Pike the fell as it descends towards Nab Scar becomes broken and full of beauty from the growth of parsley fern in the rock ledges, and stunted thorns and hollies at rare intervals in the stonier outcrop. The comparative waterlessness

of so much of Fairfield we had passed over made us rejoice in the springs that, breaking from mossy patches, scooped out their hollow way and went with whisper and tinkle down the slope.

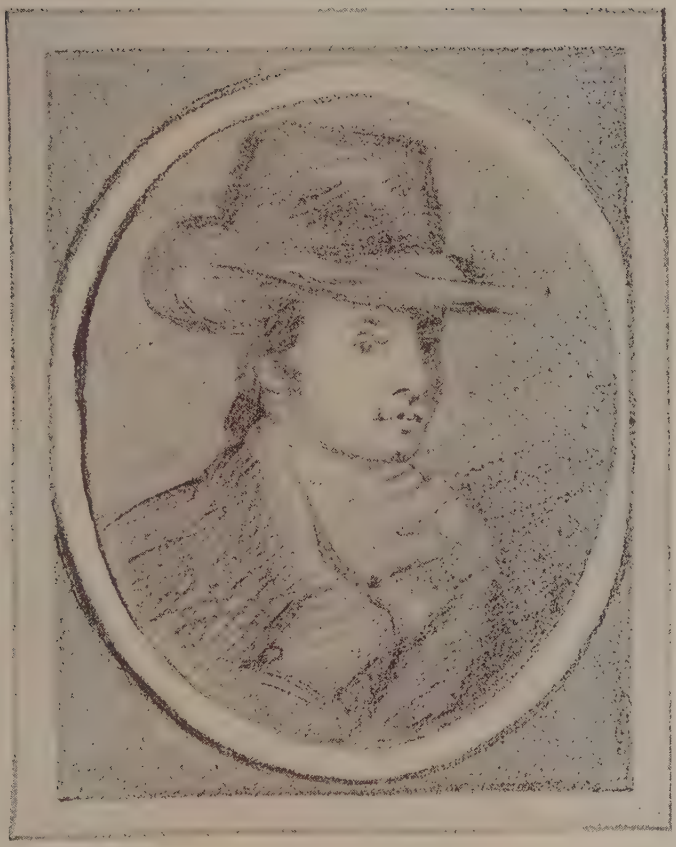
Grasmere was still hid from us, and Rydal Water not visible. Suddenly both vales and lakes were displayed beneath us, and we dropped down through the bracken to the blossoming thorns and the ancient intake walls that led to Dunnabeck.

A LESSER KNOWN WORTHY OF THE LAKE DISTRICT.

In the Grasmere churchyard stands a grave-stone with the following inscription:

'Sacred to the memory of | William Green, | the last twenty-three years of whose life was passed | in this neighbourhood | where, by his skill and industry as an artist | he produced faithfully representations | of this country | and lasting memorials of its more perishable features. | He was born at Manchester | and died at Ambleside | on the 29th day of April 1823 in the 63rd year of his age | deeply lamented by a numerous family | and universally respected. | His afflicted widow | caused this stone to be erected.'

That epitaph was written by William Wordsworth. Ten years later the quiet grassy ground opened its doors to give welcome to the remains of the widow who walked every Sunday to Grasmere after her husband's death to worship in



WILLIAM GREEN, 1760-1823

the church, near the east end of which her beloved husband and her daughter and her little son William had already been laid to rest. In these days of change, it is a great matter for us that we have such faithful records of those 'more perishable features' of the Lake District, which Wordsworth spoke of when he wrote the epitaph of his friend.

As I write, the volume of large-sized pencil sketches, which he published in 1808, lies open before me. In this volume one sees the unerring accuracy of eye for outline and detail of rock and stone and tree which give such value to the record. But it is not only as a draughtsman that he is to be honoured so much as a worker who lived laborious days. The output of his work in pencil was very great, and as an etcher as well as a water-colourist he left much work behind him.

Christopher North spoke of him as 'the most sober and industrious of God's creatures,' and truly when one considers the result of his labours between 1804 and the day of his death, one is astonished, and we realise that he must have laboured in all weathers, in heat, and in cold sometimes so intense as to require a charcoal fire at his feet. He drew, painted and etched, and he finished everything out of doors, for with that thoroughness

of purpose which was his great characteristic, he taught his pencil as he taught his children always to speak the truth.

In 1808 to 1810 he produced sixty large studies from nature. In 1819 and 1820 he produced coloured prints of the principal lakes, and held exhibitions of his work both in the Court House at Keswick, and in his own house at Ambleside, which for many years after he died was spoken of as Exhibition House.

Hartley Coleridge, who loved him, wrote thus of him, 'Of all landscape painters he was the most literal, the most absolute copyist of the objects on his retina. What he saw he painted as exactly as could be painted. He knew the trees and waterfalls as well as he knew his own children. He was not a man to belie the magnificent world for the credit of his craft. He loved truth too well. He had a hearty, healthy love of his employment such as none but an honest man could feel or understand.'

'No height or hollow of Helvellyn, no bay or bosky cape in Winander's sinuous length, no shy recess nor brook nor fairy waterfall in all the hills but there he oft had been—no idle gazer, but indefatigable with book and pencil.' He was as much the discoverer of Duddon Valley to the

world as Wordsworth himself. Duddon, 'the vale that was the darling of his honest heart.'

'Amid many discouragements, and with no better patrons than the mutable public of lakers, he bated no jot of heart or hope; his spirit never flagged, his hand and eye were never idle.'

Nor was the pencil his only outlet for energy. He was a man of infinite jest, knew his Shakespeare by heart, and when not occupied with the brush, was busy with his flute or fiddle. 'A lover of nature,' says Hartley Coleridge, 'he was no lover of solitude, and like many whose occupations condemn them to long silences, he seized eagerly on all opportunities of conversation. He loved to talk the country dialect, and was welcome at all farms as friend.'[1]

He came from an ancient stock who were known in Northamptonshire from the time of Henry VII. He was born on the 25th August, 1760, at 3 Windmill Street, Manchester, where his father was a schoolmaster and writing master. He went to school at Salford, and learned under his master, a certain Dr. Henry Clark, a love of land surveying, and leaving school, he entered a local surveyor's office and became an assistant in

[1] I am indebted to his grand-daughter, Mrs. Collingwood, for the details of the painter's family history.

1778 to a certain Mr. William Yates of Liverpool in the making of a survey of Lancashire.

It was this Lancashire survey that brought young Green, at the age of eighteen, to Ulverston, where he not only fell passionately in love with the borders of our southern lake country, but under the guidance of West, who was then working at his *Antiquities of Furness*, was initiated into the interests, historical and otherwise, of that beautiful Furness country.

Having finished his surveyor's work, he returned to Manchester, and, acting on West's advice, studied painting with such success that in 1783 we find him opening a school at the corner of Tassel Street, 'for the instruction of young gentlemen in the arts of drawing and painting.'

Still Green determined not to abandon his surveyor's profession, and a survey of Manchester —a city which was then growing fast—being much demanded, he resolved to undertake the work. It was a very difficult and laborious task that he had laid upon himself, for changes were going on, old thoroughfares were being destroyed and new streets constructed, so that it was not until 1794 that his survey was complete.

He now finally abandoned his profession as surveyor, and his next publication was the result

of visits to the lakes and to Wales—*Forty-eight Views of the Lake District and Four Views of Wales*, drawn, aquatinted and published by William Green, 3 Lad Lane, in 1795.

In 1796 he left Manchester for London to study under J. Landseer, and in the same year married, in Marylebone Parish Church, a girl fifteen years his junior, Miss Anne Moore, the beautiful daughter of a yeoman farmer near Birmingham, whose sweet voice he had fallen desperately in love with on the occasion of their first meeting at a friend's house as she sang that touching song, 'The Banks of Allan Water.' They were a great contrast these two, the bride and bridegroom. He a man above middle height, ruddy complexion and dark flashing eyes, she of lesser stature, exceedingly fair of complexion, with golden hair and eyes like a forget-me-not.

It was not till the year 1800 that, with his wife and two little daughters, Elizabeth and Jane, he removed from London to Ambleside, having assured his wife that he would rather live on bread and water in that north country scenery than on the fat of the land in London. Seven more children were born to them in that house opposite the Red Lion in the market place in Ambleside, though two only grew to maturity.

The Greens soon won the friendship of Wordsworth, of Hartley Coleridge, of Professor Wilson, and of Lord Lonsdale a lover of pictures, and became honoured dwellers in the Lake district.

It is not only as an accurate transcriber, with brush and pencil and an etching needle, of our lake country scenery, that we at this day alone, are under obligations to him. In 1819 he published in two volumes *The Tourist's New Guide to the English Lake District*,—the result, as he tells us in the preface, of observations made during a residence of eighteen years in Ambleside and Keswick. He gave three years to the work, and illustrated it with sketches made out of doors and untouched in the house. He apologises in his preface for his want of style, because 'neither his leisure nor his practice in writing have qualified him to perform it with that elegance of diction which renders even unvaried materials so truly fascinating.'

It was probably the feeling of his want of practice in diction, that led him sometimes into attempts at fine writing which he had better not have essayed. The great difficulties of proof correction were at that time to blame for some of the errata. Half the first volume, he tells us, was corrected without the aid of the manuscript,

the printer and writer living fourteen miles asunder. He tells us this with his accustomed honesty and simple truthfulness, and adds 'that duplicates of the parts sent were afterwards used, and from that time to the end of the work, it is trusted that in the composition, as the result of practice, a gradual amendment may be discovered.'

In that preface he acknowledges his indebtedness to Jonathan Otley and to two old guides, Hutton and Graves. The *Guide* is especially interesting because of the evident care for tree life, which was natural to Green. How glad one is that he did not live to see the day when the Manchester Corporation so cruelly cut down the oak wood by the side of Thirlmere, for Green goes into minute detail and loving description of the woodland in the vale of Leathes Water.

But Green is not only to be thanked for his work as artist and guide-writer, but deserves recognition to-day as one of the forerunners of the Garden City Movement. Coming into the Keswick valley he noted the possibility of such a garden city to the south of our town. He believed that part of the Derwentwater estate that belonged to Greenwich Hospital, east of Crow Park and west of Brocklebeck and south of Castle Head, though unfortunately much of the woodland had

disappeared and the ground prepared for corn, potatoes, turnips, and grass, might still be made an ideal residential paradise if only the Greenwich Hospital, having obtained the sanction of Parliament, would carry into execution at a sum of no less than £100,000, his idea of a model city, the houses and land of the said model city to become the property of the various subscribers to this sum; such subscribers to be limited to twenty shares; the rentals to go to a common fund for the upkeep of the estate and for the improvement of land and forest. The land, having been plotted out for building, should be offered on terms of a ninety-nine years' lease to subscribers who would build houses of a definite cost, the architectural detail of every house to be carefully considered, and every house to occupy a site proportionate to its value.

A few houses would be granted to haberdashers and provision merchants; some were to be tenanted by cooks, washerwomen, labourers, and grooms. A tavern and dinner house was to be supplied; one hundred and twenty-six furnished houses from £250 to £4000 each were to be built, and one hundred and seventy-four unfurnished houses from £62 to £2000 in value. A concert room and assembly room in addition

to the tavern was to be added, and last but not least, a church which was to cost £10,000 was to dominate the whole.

When Green wrote, the Church of St. John's, Keswick, had not been thought of, and if he had lived a few more years he might have seen that part of his dream come true. 'The Church of Crosthwaite,' says Green, 'though numerously, is not attended by all the parishioners; these if wholly congregated might induce an overflow. The distance of the Church from the town and the bad road which joins them, is a bar to the regular appearance of the aged and infirm, and should the above improvements be carried into execution, and a faculty obtained for the erection of a new Church, it would not only be greatly beneficial to the modern population, but to many persons living at the eastern end of Keswick.'

'For the situation of this Church, two places seem to be peculiarly appropriate; the first, the top of the steep bank in Derwent Park, rising from Brocklebeck; the other, south of Brocklebeck, on the high land near the wall, separating the pastures from the plantation of larches.

One other suggestion this worthy father of the Garden City Movement in the Lake District made. He had realised that the iniquitous window tax was

destructive of architectural merit in the houses that were being built, and he proposes in the Garden City on the Derwentwater estate, that the house shall be taxed instead of the windows, for, as the ultimate object would be 'the prosperity of the Greenwich Hospital, and therefore of our national defence, the navy,' the subscribers ought to be allowed the 'free entrance of light into these their pleasure houses as it steals from heaven without embargo or blockade.'

He urges great care in the upkeep of the woodlands. He thinks 'these trees as objects of local elegance and grandeur should be held sacred, and he believes that such a well situated and well managed woodland would act not only as a continual mine of wealth to the jolly tars of old England, but would give their friends and supporters a fund of recreation, and when brought into full composition with the grey summits of upstretched rocks and mountains would be never-failing fountains of delight.'

Green sent his plan to the Governors of the Greenwich Hospital, but he was before his time, and the Greenwich Hospital did not give him encouragement. But we, in our day of Garden Cities, with our own little Garden City at Keswick, and our greater Garden Cities at Letchworth,

Hampstead and at Ruislip, may all stand in reverence by the side of the grave in the Grasmere churchyard and be thankful that there ever dwelt in our midst 'the kind, courteous, ingenious and enthusiastic spirit' whose mortal ashes rest below.

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THE OLYMPIA OF WRESTLING IN THE NORTH.

The celebrated Grasmere sports take place to-day; for to-day is the Thursday nearest the 20th of August, which is by long custom the appointed day for the meeting; and the beautiful lakeland village will be invaded by thousands eager to watch the guides' race and the hound trail, and above all the wrestling. Wrestling, or as it is pronounced in the North, 'warstlin',' 'worstlin',' or 'wrustlin',' has a very ancient pedigree. In Edward the Sixth's time the giant 'Herd' went from Westmoreland to wrestle before the King, and won by his prowess house and home in his native vale.

The doings of the 'Cork lad of Kentmere' still echo in the Troutbeck valley. In his day Sunday was the day given over to wrestling throughout the northern counties, and in the time of the Commonwealth, the 'Associated ministers of the churches of Cumberland and Westmoreland' issued

a manifesto 'suspending from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, all scandalous persons that shall upon the Lord's Day use any dancing, football, stool-ball, or wrestling.' The document issued in 1656 was not conciliatory, for it spoke of these counties 'as hitherto a proverb and byword in respect of ignorance and prophaneness,' and it failed of its effect. Wrestling was still the order of the day, and not only tended to health by keeping men from the alehouses, but indirectly helped to preserve the village greens.

It was not, however, till the middle of the eighteenth century that wrestling, which not improbably came into the country with our Viking forefathers in the ninth century, became a fashion as well as a passion. Old and young took part in it. The champion went to church wearing his challenge belt on the Sunday after his victory, and by way of challenge displayed his decoration at a neighbour church the Sunday following. 'Stone Carrs,' near Greystoke, was a famous meeting-place for Mid-Cumbrians. Melmerby and Langwathby were other noted villages for wrestlers in the East—the Melmerby 'Rounds' took place on Old Midsummer's Day, the Langwathby on New Year's Day. The former went forward uninterruptedly till 1850, the latter till 1870, when George Stead-

man, to be the future champion heavy-weight wrestler of the North, won his spurs at the last meeting held on Langwathby Green.

It was not till 1807 that the Swifts, at Carlisle, became a famous ring, and Arlecdon and Lorton and Egremont became famous meeting-places about the same time for men of the West. Though truth to say, wherever the fell shepherds met for sheep gathering or sheep exchange, whether it was on the top of High-street or on Mosedale, wrestling would be part of the programme, and the Bride-wains or Bidden Weddings generally included wrestling in the programme of entertainment.

As for the country south of the Raise, the Ferry, on Windermere, seems to have been the principal ring for the Lake district till Christopher Wilson, of Elleray, got up a ring at Ambleside, and by becoming the donor of a champion's belt and money prizes attracted the countryside thither. When he left the Lake country, the Ferry sports became again the principal gathering ground, and it was not till the Grasmere Ring grew into a fashion that the Ferry was eclipsed.

Grasmere is to-day the Olympia for wrestling in the North. There was a time when it was ten chances to one that Keswick would be the centre. The ring on the Swifts, at Carlisle, was closed for

four years, and the wrestling was removed to Crow Park in 1818, by the banks of Derwentwater. Then and for a few subsequent years, largely owing to the exertions of Mr. Pocklington, of Barrow, Keswick became the gathering ground of the most important wrestling in the North.

It may be safely said that the Grasmere sports to-day, in so far as they are a popular gathering for the gentlefolk of the county, owe their popularity to Christopher Wilson. He not only made a practice of trying a fall with the winner at the Ambleside or Ferry Ring, but, backed up by the son of the Bishop of Llandaff, of Calgarth, Richard Watson, he got all his friends amongst the resident gentry to take an interest in the wrestling and to attend the meetings. Still in the farm houses may be seen the simple challenge belt presented by the steward of the Windermere Regatta, and still men speak of the 'girt professor wha was a vara bad un to lick.'

But Christopher Wilson's personal example has not been followed, and it is a thousand pities that we never see in the wrestling ring at Grasmere your gentleman amateur as opposed to your professional wrestler. This is mainly owing to the fact that this grandest of games of skill has never been fostered at any of our public schools, and the sport

has been left to the fellside shepherd and the farmer or miner of the countryside.

It is a good thing for the nobility and gentry to be interested in this noble athletic sport. It is a better thing for England that the love of wrestling is not dependent upon their patronage. The really interested spectators at Grasmere are not the carriage folk who come together largely to see one another, but the fellsiders who sit on the grass or the wooden seats round the ring. There are doubtless amongst these spectators descendants of Dodd, Faucett, Richardson, Litt, Miles and James Dixon, Rowland and John Long, Mackereth, Nicholson, Dennison, Todd, Robinson, Weightman, McLaughlin, Wilson, Longmire, Walker, Chapman, who feel a kind of ancestral joy in their blood at sight of a sport that once brought honour to their fellside farm; and though the days of William Richardson, of Caldbeck, the winner of 240 belts, whom Professor Wilson spoke of in 'Maga' as Belted Will, and the days of Longmire, whom Charles Dickens saw win his 175th belt, are past, one may see in many a farm's best parlour the broad belt and the carefully-compiled list of wrestling matches, written out with elaborate penmanship and glazed and framed. And never is the 'crack' so keen as when the wrestling bouts are spoken of, and the champion descendant

to the third and fourth generation fights all the old-time battles o'er again.

In Christopher Wilson's day, a politician passing through the county at a time when a contest for Parliamentary honours was agate between Lord Lowther and Mr. Brougham, heard nothing of their claims; the only contest that really mattered lay between Thomas Ford, of Egremont, and William Richardson, of Caldbeck, who, though he knew it not, were about to wrestle at Carlisle, and he came away feeling Lord Lowther would certainly be ousted by one of these men of no landed property, and probably Radicals. The fact was that, for the moment, the public of the North cared a great deal more whether Richardson would win his fall at the Carlisle wrestling than whether Brougham or Lord Lowther would take the seat in the House.

It is true that football and cricket have tended to oust wrestling from the towns, but in the far-off fellside farms the barn floor still sees twinkle of legs and feet, and echoes to the result of hype and buttock in spare times after work. And though the thirst for money prizes and the gambling craze has brought in 'barneying' and the buying and selling of falls in professional rings, there is still, as may be witnessed at Grasmere, a large number of the breeches and flannel-shirt order who have no

wish to be promoted to singlet and drawers, and who love the sport for the sport's sake, and wrestle for pure joy in the skill of the game.

These money prizes are not an unmixed good. The old days of the 'Stone Carrs,' when, as in 1787, we read the prizes were 'For the wrestlers, a leather belt; for the leapers, a pair of gloves; for the foot-racer, a handkerchief,' continued well into last century; and when the Cumberland and Westmoreland Society in London, for the encouragement of wrestling, formed itself, in 1824, the committee limited subscriptions to 2s. 6d., and determined upon offering as prizes to be wrestled for a silver cup, two silver snuff-boxes, three gold seals, and a pair of buckskin gloves to be leapt for. Things have altered for the worse in this respect, and old wrestlers often express the wish that the days when 'yan nobbut wrustled for a bit of a leather strap' could come back again; but even now, though £120 is the sum set apart for the wrestling ring at Grasmere, it cannot be said, if there is to be money payment in the matter, that £15 and a belt is too large a reward for the actual exertion involved in six or eight hard bouts for the championship. And though one might well wish the days of the laurel crown might return, or a simple medal might be the prize, that time will not come till something

of the enthusiasm for the sport which was quick and alive at the beginning of last century has returned, and every youngster at the village school has been encouraged to 'throw down caps and tak hod' for the sake of the skill and splendid exercise of muscle and temper, which the art of wrestling yields.

We are all just now a little Japanese-mad, and one of the things our allies are teaching us is the worth of self-mastery. We cannot learn this better than in the wrestling ring. To be able to meet your man with a smile, and after tremendous exertion to be thrown right over his shoulder or clean off the breast, and then to rise and shake hands, and, if one felt one's friendship was the stronger for the fall, this is fine discipline, to know that the least loss of temper during the agony of struggle means loss of victory is in every way a gain to character.

It is true that the old Viking power, to endure all things, makes for the self-mastery necessary in this sport of their sons in Cumberland and Westmoreland, but if the gambling instinct is kept out of the ring the fellside farms can be trusted to go on giving us just the stuff in bone and sinew, in mind and temper, which has made famous the name of Cumberland and Westmoreland for the past two

centuries, and the nation will be the gainer. In no other trial of actual bodily skill does art have such chance against mere brute force. A little man, whose arms are so short that he actually cannot make fingers meet round the girth of the vast back of his opponent, will grass his man as if by magic. It is a day when this gospel needs preaching. We must not leave it to Japan to be the only gospeller. The Grasmere ring may have the message for us all, that science, and not bulk, spirit, and not force, shall have the mastery.

Since this passage was written a revival of wrestling has taken place, and, thanks largely to the Association and their rules, 'barneying' is every year made more difficult, while the wrestling academies are turning out apt pupils in this grand northern school for manliness and skill.

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TO EASEDALE TARN.

From May right through till this first week in February, 1911, the oldest inhabitant cannot remember a more windless season at the Lakes.

One of the results of this calm time is that the oaks, except when felled, as they have recently been by the Manchester Corporation on the western shore of Thirlmere, are full of leafage and the beech-tree hedges are bright with colour. There is not a single snowdrift on the hills. The bracken and the yellow bent give them such colour that in the low western sunlight they seem to burn with fire, and already at the call of Spring the buds on the willow are ivory-white, and the hazel catkins hang their tassels of gold in the copse.

On such a February day how could one better spend an hour than in a walk to Easedale Tarn. I know the Lake country well, and each time I visit Easedale Tarn I come back thinking there is

no hour's walk in the Grasmere neighbourhood better worth the taking, no walk that in a single hour will give such variety of scene, touch so many stops of tender memory or give so surely a sense of solitude and of mountain secret and charm.

As I passed up between the mossy walls with Butharlip-How on the right hand I fell into talk with a descendant of those Vikings of old time who still live where Buthar the Leaper, Buthar the Nimble, had his 'steading.' The fair hair and grey blue eyes and large boned limbs of him betokened his ancestry. He had been down to the bread shop and was returning with the white food-stuff that has superseded the old-fashioned whole meal of the dales, and we began to discuss the benefits to be derived from eating that old-fashioned stone-ground flour instead of the anaemic, tasteless white starch which, with 30 per cent. of nutriment cast out of it, and sometimes bleached with chemicals into the bargain, is sold nowadays to the poor for bread.

'Ay, ay,' said he, 'I seed ye'v been writing in t' papers a gay bit aboot "haver bread." I've heard my grandfadder saay, theere warn't a hoose to ca' a hoose that didn't mak "haver" i' Girsmer in't ald daays, but what min, times is sadly changed for

t' warse, and 'cept at t' flower show yance a year, theere's not a basket o' haver bread to be seen.'

'And how did you make it,' I said, 'in the old days?'

'I my days "haver bread" was t' staff o' life for all farms hereaboot, and we mostly what used to bake twice a year, November and end of February. Theere was a girt sheet o' iron, rather more than hoaf an inch thick, which we ca'd girdle, built on t' top of t' small brick furnace int back kitchen. We lads used to take turns at "beeting" t' fire, that is feeding fire, wi' bracken, wi' shavings or wood. Me mudder took t' finest oatmeal, divided it into two hoaves, made one hoaf into a stiff paste, and kept t' other hoaf o' dry meal, for rolling into t' cake as she rolled it oot on t' rolling board. She wad knead t' meal into t' size of a cricket ball, and throw it on to t' board after well dusting it wi' meal. T' board was likely aboot two feet square, and she would sune roll oot t' cricket ball to cover t' board, and after rolling it oot varra thin, she would pass a knife backwarts and forrarts under it to keep it fra sticking, and every time she rolled it, she would throw on a lile bit mair o' t' dry meal. Then she wad tak t' board in hand and toss it so as to change sides, and go on rolling it and rolling it and better rolling it

until it was as thin as brown paper. She wad turn hersel roond then til t' girdle, and by drawing the board quickly from beneath it, leave t' cake upon t' het iron plate. By the time she had rolled another cake oot, t' first cake wad be baked, and she wad move it to t' cooler end of the girdle to dry and crisp. "Haver bread" if it was stored int dry meal-kist would keep for months, and as I telt ye, it was t' staff o' life for all farm lasses and lads i' them daays. I could varra weel wish girdles would coom in agean, for with a bit o' butter or cheese or laal bit o' rum butter at t' churstening time, or basin o' milk til it, theere's nowt so good to my ways o' thinking as "haver bread" to yan's meal.

'But there's a deal o' changes i' t' daale since grandfadder went. It's not bread that's changed, it's fwok. I suppoase ye'v heard tell that Mrs. J—— is gone and aw? Seed her grave likely in t' yard theere wi' a lock o' flowers on it?'

'Yes,' I replied, 'I have just come from that grave,' for I felt that, with her passing, one of the last few links with old times that remained here has been broken. Her husband knew Wordsworth and Hartley Coleridge, and the Lake School poets. With one other exception, I do not believe there are now in Grasmere more than two or three people

who can speak from remembrance of Hartley Coleridge.

We passed Glenthorne, the house that had been so lately darkened with loss, and went slowly forward. How beautiful the meadow-land that lay in undulation along the vale and reached up to the woods of Allan Bank, and how stately stood the oak trees here and there as quiet guardians of the vale of rest. It is owed to the late owner that they are still standing, and we trust that to her memory they may for many years give beauty and glory to the valley meadows.

Owners of land in the Lake District hardly realise what joy the possession of a beautiful shapely tree gives to passers-by, or we should see less of cruel cutting down of well-grown trees at the dictates of the timber merchant.

As I gazed back I saw through the park-like meadow-land, the road that led by the house of mourning up to that other house, the amenity of whose surroundings she had preserved, Allan Bank, the home of Wordsworth from 1808 to the end of 1811—Allan Bank, where Wordsworth wrote his pamphlet on the Convention of Cintra under such terrible conditions of domestic discomfort—Allan Bank, whose smoky chimneys of old eventually drove him to the Grasmere Rectory.

Writing to Mrs. Marshall on the 4th of December, 1808, this is what Dorothy Wordsworth says:

'We have grievous troubles to struggle with. A smoky house, wet cellars, and workmen by the half dozen making attempts (hitherto unsuccessful) to remedy these evils. We are making one effort more; and, if that end as heretofore, we shall be reduced to the miserable necessity of quitting Grasmere; for this house is at present literally not habitable, and there is no other in the vale. You can have no idea of the inconvenience we have suffered. There was one stormy day in which we could have no fire but in my brother's study, and that chimney smoked so much that we were obliged to go to bed. We cooked in the study.... Partly on account of smoke and windy weather, and partly because of the workmen, we have been for more than a week together at different times without a kitchen fire. The servants, you may be sure, have been miserable; and we have had far too much labour and far too little quiet.'

Four days after this Dorothy continues her lament to Mrs. Clarkson: 'I will not attempt to detail the height and depth and number of our sorrows in connection with smoky chimneys. They are so very

bad that if they cannot be mended we must leave the house, beautiful as everything will soon be out of doors, dear as is the vale where we have lived so long. The labour of the house is literally doubled. Dishes are washed, and no sooner set into the pantry than they are covered with smoke. Chairs, carpets, the painted ledges of the rooms, all are ready for the reception of soot and smoke, requiring endless cleaning, and are never clean. . . . In fact we have seldom an hour's leisure (either Mary or I) till after seven o'clock (when the children go to bed), for all the time that we have for sitting still in the course of the day we are obliged to employ in scouring (and many of our evenings also).'

But we forget all about the smoky chimneys in the thought of how often up that path during Wordsworth's tenancy of Allan Bank, the diminutive De Quincey would be seen going to enquire after his favourites the children, or Samuel Taylor Coleridge would be met with his arms full of books from the Dove-Cottage library, wandering half in dream towards his hospitable second home, to correct the proofs for *The Friend.*

We walked briskly forward over Goody Bridge and could not help thinking a little sadly of the Goody Bridge of our childhood, its quaint hump-

backed contour, the graceful bedding of its arch stones. And though the parapet in its strength was still some symbol of the character of our Northerners, we sigh to think that the days of old Westmoreland bridges are beyond recall and the days of such modern builders as at the command of the County Council have perpetrated the bridge on the main road to Keswick, just this side the Raise-gap, have come to stay.

In the quiet of the afternoon we heard the Easedale Beck chiming from the thicket through its stepping-stones on the left—'Emma's Dell,' as Wordworth called it,—and soon winning the 'Slate Brig' ('Steel Brig,' as it has been called from old time), near the entrance gate to Lancrigg, we entered upon a pebbly path, much washed-out, that leads on the left of the beck through the Boothwaite levels towards Brimmer-Head.

As we passed forward the whole of the vale seemed possessed with the presence of Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. We had been reminded of Lake worthies as we passed Allan Bank, but S. T. Coleridge and De Quincey are left behind there. Boothwaite fields and the terrace slopes and woodland of Lancrigg upon the breast of Helm Crag—these are dedicated to Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, and conse-

crated to the warm and lifelong friendship of the beautiful Mrs. Fletcher and her daughter Lady Richardson, with the Rydal poet.

The Prelude was largely composed as Wordsworth walked to and fro on the green terrace-walk through the Lancrigg wood. It was there that he wrote his sonnet which begins

> 'Mark the concentred hazels that enclose
> Yon old grey stone.'

The trees have heard the prayer of the poet, they still live, and the grey stone can still 'its pensive likeness keep of a dark chamber where the mighty sleep.'

The hollies which Wordsworth planted in the woodland with such care, though diminished in number, still shine through the winter coppice. It is well for us that the tenant of the woody garden has a heart that cares for the literary associations of the place, and has inscribed a stone to tell us of the time when Dorothy used to write down the lines of *The Prelude*, as they were murmured by the brother in the open air study of the terrace walk :

> 'Hoc in supercilio sedebat
> Dorothea Wordsworth
> Dum ex ore fratris prope inambulantis
> Carmina describit.'

Long may he live, this wise man learned in Roman law, this lover of books and roses, to care for the haunts of the poets—sister and brother.

From the first week of Wordsworth's life in Grasmere, this Lancrigg terrace-walk was a favourite one. Professor Knight has recorded how, strolling with Lady Richardson on the terrace in December, 1843, Wordsworth said : 'This is a striking anniversary for me, for this day forty-four years ago, my sister and I took up our abode at Grasmere, and three days after, we found out this walk, which long remained our favourite.' And Lady Richardson adds : 'It was their custom to spend the fine days of summer in the open air chiefly in the valley of Easedale.'

It was through Wordsworth's kind offices as lawyer and land agent in one that Mrs. Fletcher was enabled to become possessor of Lancrigg, and when in 1839 her daughter, Lady Richardson, was consulting Wordsworth at Foxhow about the possibility of its purchase, she tells us how the poet described the tangled copse and the natural terrace under the crag, and said of the little 'Rocky Well,' 'I know it by heart,' and at once asked his wife to read the sonnet which has been referred to.

But other gracious presences haunt Lancrigg.

It was here on June 5th, 1865, after a forenoon quietly spent at work in the garden, and a call on Dr. Davy and on Mrs. Arnold at Foxhow, and, after working quietly for an hour or two in the evening at his favourite Wicliffe, that Sir John Richardson, the arctic explorer, went up stairs to his sleep and never woke again.

For ten years this singularly gifted man, as modest as he was brave, as saintly as he was kind, had spent here the well-earned rest a very active life had won him. What he endured as an explorer of the arctic regions and in quest of his friend and comrade, Sir John Franklin, who had forged the last link of the north-west passage with his life, is well known, and the *Journal of a Boat Voyage through Rupert's Land and the Arctic Sea in 1851* is still a standard work ; whilst his botanical appendix to Captain Franklin's first journey is one of the most accurate catalogues of plants of the arctic regions, and the best known ; his contributions to the zoology of British North America and his knowledge of ichthyology gained him a first place amongst the scientific men of his time. But it is not generally known how, in the last years of his life, he endeared himself to the inhabitants of this dale. One of the wallers of the valley expressed his sorrow at the time of

the news of the loss of one who thought nothing too much trouble, if it was to help the poor, by saying: 'Ay, I have left my wife and mother at home in tears, and no wonder.'

We pass along now towards the white shining Sour Milk Ghyll that seems to hang upon the breast of the fell ahead of us. How few southerners know that the word 'sour' should really be written 'sauer' and means nothing more or less than a marshy wet place. It is the ghyll of milk-white water from the marsh, not the ghyll of milk gone sour, that we shall pass by *en route* for Easedale Tarn. It is the ghyll that flashes all through the year its silver presence to the Grasmere valley.

On our left hand, by its dark yew trees, stands beneath the over-shadowing fellside, a dreary-looking cottage farm. That is the Cottage of Blind-Tarn Ghyll—the first house in the dale to receive visitors, the last house to ply the weaver's shuttle and loom.

I never pass it without feeling that it seems by the sombreness of its appearance to tell us that it has connexion with some dark tragedy, and this is true enough. Who that has read the touching tale in the *Book of Golden Deeds*, 'The Children of Blind Tarn Ghyll,' but feels awed by the sorrow

that fell upon the lonely cottage when on Saturday the 18th March, 1808, a house full of little children was suddenly bereft of father and mother, who lost their lives in a blinding snow-storm. Dorothy Wordsworth, writing to Mrs. Clarkson ten days later, says :

'Most likely you have read in the papers of the dismal event which happened in our neighbourhood on Saturday sen-night, but I am sure you will wish to know further particulars. Our thoughts have been almost wholly employed about the poor sufferers or their family ever since. George and Sarah Green, two inhabitants of this vale, went to a sale in Langdale in the afternoon ; and set off homewards in the evening, intending to cross the fells and descend just above their own cottage, a lonely dwelling in Easedale. They had left a daughter at home eleven years old, with the care of five brothers and sisters younger than herself, the youngest an infant at the breast. These dear helpless creatures sate up till eleven o'clock expecting their parents, and then went to bed thinking that they had stayed all night in Langdale because of the weather.

'All next day they continued to expect them, and on Monday morning one of the boys went to a house on the opposite side of the dale to borrow

a cloak. On being asked for what purpose, he replied that his sister was going to Langdale to *lait their folk* who had never come home. The man of the house started up, and said that they were lost; and immediately spread the alarm. As long as daylight lasted on that day Monday, and on till Tuesday afternoon, all the men of Grasmere, and many from Langdale, were out upon the fells. On Tuesday afternoon the bodies were found miserably mangled, having been cut by the crags. They were lying not above a quarter of a mile above a house in Langdale where their shrieks had been distinctly heard by two different persons who supposed that the shrieks came from some drunken people who had been at the sale.

'The bodies were brought home in a cart, and buried in one grave last Thursday. The poor children all the time they had been left by themselves suspected no evil; and as soon as it was known by others that their father and mother were missing, the truth came upon them like a thunderstroke. The neighbouring women came to look after them, and found them in a pitiable state, all crying together. In a little time, however, they were pacified, and food was brought into the house, for they had scarcely anything left.

'Their parents were the poorest people in the vale, though they had a small estate of their own and a single cow. This morsel of land, now deeply mortgaged, had been in the possession of the family for several generations; they were loath to sell it, and consequently they had never had any assistance from the parish. He had been twice married. By his former wife he had left one son and three daughters, and by her who perished with him four sons and four daughters. They must have very soon parted with their land if they had lived, for their means were reduced by little, and little, till scarcely anything but the land was left. The cow was grown old, and they had not money to buy another. They had sold their horse, and were in the habit of carrying bridles, or anything that they could spare, to barter for potatoes or bread.

'Luxuries they had none. They never made tea, and when the neighbours went to the children on Monday they found nothing in the house but a few (pieces) of lean dried mutton. The cow at this time does not give a quart of milk in a day. You will wonder how they lived at all, and indeed I can hardly tell you. They used to sell a few peats in the summer, which they dug out of their own heart's heart—their land—and perhaps the

old man (he was sixty-five years of age) might earn a little money by doing odd jobs for his neighbours; but it was never known till now (by us at least) how much distressed they must have been. See them when you would, they were always cheerful; and when they went from home they were decently dressed. The children, too, though very ragged, were clean; and are as pure and innocent, and in every respect as promising children as I ever saw.

'Since this melancholy event our thoughts have been chiefly employed in laying schemes to prevent the children from falling into the hands of persons who may use them unkindly, and for giving them decent education. One of the eight is in place, and can provide for herself. The next is with us. She has attended the children since we came from Coleorton; but we had intended parting with her at Whitsuntide if her parents had lived, and have hired an elder servant in her place, thinking it bad for the children's tempers to be under one so young. We shall, however, now keep her, not as a servant, but send her to Grasmere School, and teach her to sew; and do our best to fit her for a good place. She is as innocent, and as guileless, as a baby; but her faculties are rather slow. After her there are six left, and it is probable they will be boarded out

by the parish. We hope that a sufficient sum will be raised for the purposes I have mentioned. Everybody who has the power seems disposed to assist them. The Bishop of Llandaff will subscribe ten guineas, and we have received five guineas from a Mr. Wilson—a very amiable young man, a friend and adorer of William and his verses, who is building a house at Windermere. This sum we shall keep back till we see what is done by the parish and others, and we hope to get more from our friends. Perhaps your uncle Hardcastle may do something.'

But the Easedale Beck sings so merrily at our side, and the sun gleams so gloriously on Blakerigg and the Tarn Crags beyond, and the voice of the thrush trying his first spring song is so full of happiness that we forget the gloom upon the Blind Tarn hillside, and wander forward much in thought of the days when the shuttle sounded in so many cottage homes, and so many weavers from far and near came trooping over the fellside on our left to bring their cloth from Langdale to the fulling mill, that then used to stand at the foot of the Sour Milk waterfall. The road they came, and the road by which the poor Greens believed that they were passing along when they fell in the darkness to their death, is still quite clear to be seen, marked

by 'intack' walls that led right down from the fell top to the fulling mill aforementioned, and tradition still lingers in the village that the commoners of Grasmere obtained a small sum each year from the Langdale folk for right to use that path.

We are now passing Brimmer Head, or, as in old time it used to be written, Bremer Head, and away to the right gleams the opening of far Easedale. Nearer, and under Helm Crag, above the picturesque group of buildings of the Brimmer Head farm, stands Easedale House, where, in his serene old age, still dwells the man who, more than anyone else I know in the Lake country, has done his best to preserve from 'rash assault' of railway enterprise, and from the footpath-stopping proclivities of new comers to the district, this national recreation ground for the weary town workers of northern England.

Our pathway now runs high above the Easedale stream, made beautiful by its gnarled oak trees and its abundant holly growth. The stream passing over the green slate shines up at us like liquid chrysolite; a 'Bessy Dooker' curtseys to us, then shoots with its white star far down the beck, and bobs and twinkles from the mossy darkness of its rest. Upward the path goes, and the few green meadows gleam like emerald, though the spring

has not yet come, in contrast with the umber and the amber of the bracken-rusted fells. That little bridge in the three-cornered meadow below still preserves to us by name one of the arts that is fading from our district, for the bridge is called 'Willy Good-waller Brig,' and those who have ever watched the building of the dry walls in the district, the clever placing of the through stones, and the picturesque laying of the top stones, may learn something of the care required and the skill displayed that goes to the making of a good dry stone wall. I never gaze on these enclosure walls that write their strange hieroglyphics on the fell-side, without wonder at the patience and the skill of the generation passed away, and without a regret that the introduction of the cheaper wire fence has ceased to call out any longer the art of the mountain waller.

We have reached the fall. No trace of the 'fulling mill' survives, save that on the further side of the beck, on the fellside slope, may be with difficulty made out where once the water from the mill-wheel passed to join the stream below. Before we pass the fall, we may turn back and wonder at the picturesqueness of the scene to the south. The beauty is at this time the colour of the larch groves and the copses that picturesquely

dot the vale. The larch grove beneath us has been felled, and the time may come when all this colour scheme will be wiped out, but as long as the bracken exists, and the frost of autumn falls upon the fells, we can never lose the exquisite colours that seem to fill the valley's sides to-day with 'stationary sunshine,' and even on the upper fells right round from the Grisedale gap to the far-off Wansfell ridge, though no bracken grows on those heights, the yellow bent in the spring sunshine has washed the hills with gold.

The beauty of the juniper bushes seen against the rest of the fern at this season of the year, is a feature in the landscape. We hardly realise how much we owe to this evergreen among the Westmoreland hills till the dead season of winter sets in. But they who have wandered over Loughrigg at this time of the year can never forget the beauty of the colouring of the juniper valley upon that blessed hill.

We pass now through level ground, which very likely at one time was the bottom of a second tarn, and thence ascending by a steep path with Tarn Crag in front of us and Blakerigg upon our left, we reach the little stone hut which has been built like a swallow's nest against a huge boulder, and Easedale Tarn lies below us.

As we ascended, the work of the glacial age was in clear evidence, the streaming mounds of moraine matter, the roches perchées. But once at the tarn one seems to be back at an earlier age. We feel that here we are standing inside an extinct crater, and we go back in thought to that second period of volcanic action that had, geologists tell us, Ambleside for its chief centre of volcanic activity, and when with many subsidiary volcanoes, here, and at Bow Fell, at Thirlmere and at Keswick and in Borrowdale, the subterranean fires were giving birth to the hills of the Lake country that lie to the south of the much earlier series of sedimentary rocks we call the Skiddaw Slate. It has been suggested that the 12,000 feet of Skiddaw Slate may have taken six millions of years to pile up; it is thought that no less than four millions of years went to the making of this second series of volcanic ash. It is indeed a peep through the corridors of time that we have as we stand and gaze with wonder and awe at the beauty of the dark amphitheatre of crags that surround the Easedale Tarn. Geologists tell us that Skiddaw probably began to come into being more than sixty millions of years ago.

It was a spring day in the valley when we started for our climb. We have only ascended 900 feet,

but here it is winter. The ice-covered tarn looks like a great shield of iron-grey steel set in burnished gold, so brightly shines the russet fern at our feet about the tarn. Hushed now for the frost, the Codale Beck glitters upon the breast of the cliff down which it descends.

But we forget all the winter aspect of the scene in happy memories of pleasant summer expeditions, and the cheery cups of tea from the hands of the hut-keeper here. Rememberable too is the blue curl of smoke from the wood fire ascending into quiet air, which used to greet us from below after a long trudge over White Stones, or from the Langdale Pikes, and as we think of its pleasant welcoming, there comes back to mind the quaint talk of the hermit of the place, who with his own hands reared the hut to be bequeathed to future generations, and who hither came day by day, through storm and fine, to await his guests.

Age fell upon him. He could no longer take the upward climb, but still he would be seen on the back of his noble 'cuddy,' and here he would spend not only long days but long nights, till the cuddy again returned to take him to his week-end home. If to any human being it has been given to find rest and quietude in his later years, 'far from the madding crowd,' it was

given to old Hayton, the host of the Easedale Hut.

We return, and all the way Helm Crag and the beauty of the Fairfield round behind it grows upon us, and soon we have full vision of what Gray the poet would have described as 'the little unsuspected paradise' of near Easedale. But the memory of the walk will haunt us long, and help us in days of darkness and hours of anxious work for many a year to come.

NOTE, PAGE 143.—J. E. Gray, of the British Museum, writing at the time of Sir John Richardson's death, says that he "became par excellence the ichthiologist of England."

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BUCK CASTLE—A BRITISH STRONGHOLD.

I was looking the other day at the very interesting collection of stone axes and querns and 'rubbing stones' in the Museum at Keswick, and thinking of the men who peopled these dales in prehistoric time, when my eyes lit upon a new acquisition—two bronze British bracelets—that had been discovered in the spring of the year, in a crag that overlooks Thirlmere.

How they came to be there is a secret and must remain one. Had the woman, whose lover had made her glad with them in the days of long ago, fallen a prey to wild beasts as she attended the goats beneath the Armboth Fells? Had she died of wounds after a tribal foray? or had she, after some trial at the 'Justice Stone' near by, been flung to her death from the crag and left to the wolves and the kites and the ravens?

Who can tell? But at least it set one thinking

of the old times in the Thirlmere valley, and of the fierce days when the people who dwelt upon the heights, for fear of the woods, found at the back of Raven Crag a sure foot-hold against the foe, and the shepherds, when at 'Watch-crags' on Helvellyn the sentinels gave alarm, were able to drive their flocks and take their women-folk to that triple-trenched castle fort, high up above Shoulthwaite Ghyll.

Buck Castle, as we call it to-day, is full of mystery and awe. It was no easy matter in the days when stone was used for iron, to dig out those great crescent entrenchments at the south of the crag. How many a tribesman and tribal lord helped to repair the breaches and to deepen the fosses! How many a prisoner long before the days of 'Thorstein of the Mere' looked hence and longed for liberty!

But the time to see Buck Castle in its beauty is when from the top of Raven Crag one can gaze north and south and west upon a world of heather-bloom. It is at such a time that the sorrow and the agony of the old tribal warfare is sung away by the sound of innumerable bees; it is at such a time that one forgets the fire and fury of raiders here, where the only smoke that one sees is the smoke of the pollen that curls about a wandering

sheep as it moves shoulder-deep through its purple pasturage.

To-day

> 'is the day when lilies blow
> And clouds are highest up in air.'

At least, if one may take the lily of the poet to be the Madonna lily of August. There has been a little frost in the night, and the virginian creepers have suddenly gone to crimson, but at dawn a storm of rain has swept all sign of frost away, and though in any other country one would suppose a tramp upon the fells was impossible, the weather-wise ones hereabout know well that rain after the frost of the night is sure augury for a sunny day, and the heather will be drop-dry before ten o'clock in the morning.

We pass up to the moor, and the heather upon Skiddaw shines glorious in its fullest beauty; cloud-shadows upon Blencathra are purple dark. There, away to the left, runs the lane to the Druids' Circle, whence those Buck Castle robbers, or runners to refuge, could see in old time the fires that called the mountain villagers to prayer or council of war. By our side, as we descend to Causeway Foot, are echoes of the later Roman day. We may still see amongst the firs and the rushes, the hollow road the mules made, as they

went with their burdens to the Roman camp upon Castlerigg.

But we are going in quest of the early Britons, men whose stone axes have been found buried with them beside the way in Naddle and St. John's Vale. We pass St. John's Vale Parsonage, and an echo of a later day than Roman times rings up from the little enclosure by the wayside spring. For this is Honey-pot, and all the low-lying meadows on our left, that shine with swampy pools from last night's deluge, are 'the pots' or low-lying grounds that were part of the farm when Honig the Northman sent his son from 'Honig-stadhr' or Honister, to make his 'steading' in this quiet Naddle Vale.

Away up above us on our right is the great stone or roche perchée that was brought hither when the snow-ploughs planed the rocks by the roadside into smoothness. It is in shape so like a mitre that men speak of it here as St. Kentigern's Mitre, and remember how in the sixth century that good man taught the sun-worshippers on Castrigg Fell about another Sun, even Christ the Light of the World.

And now we are in full view of the gorge between Shoulthwaite Bend and Erne or Eagle Fell, whence come leaping in whiteness this morning the waters

that those old holders of the fort at the head of the gorge would drink of at their peril when the well within their ramparts ran dry. We cross Shoulthwaite Moss, beautiful with its birches and sweet with the scent of bog-myrtle,[1] and in mid-valley the coachman pauses to startle with his horn a three-fold echo from her fellside seat. It is from here that one gains so fine a view of Helvellyn in its majestic nakedness. It is from here that one sees well the little 'wart' upon the sky-line to the east that was the Watch Crags of old.

Forward now we go towards Bridge End. The cross in the wall boulder on our right may very well mark the spot of a sanctuary cross in mediaeval days. But we are thinking of other sanctuaries to-day, the Camp of Refuge on the height.

We know that the way thitherward will lead up by a pleasant zig-zag fell-path, which the Romans may have made when they held the store-houses for grain or mineral on the shoulder beneath Raven Crag. That Raven Crag is not to-day 'an awful form,' as Wordsworth saw it, is not to-day 'black as a storm.' Rather it has wrapped itself and its purple shades in vesture of laughing sunlight and

[1] This was written before the Manchester Corporation had swept these all away.

green embroidery of the fern, while here and there, like a rosy scarf across its bosom, the heather shines out purple pink.

Right in front of us, as we approach Bridge End, beyond the River Bure, the Great How, bald at the top but wooded at the base, seems to block the landscape. Wordsworth has told us of the rosy-cheeked schoolboys who there built up, without mortar or lime,

'A man at the top of the crag';

but centuries before Wordsworth's time, the 'maen' or cairn that was built there was the Cairn of the Law, for there the 'Logsayer' or 'Law Sayer' spoke the dooms to the assembled tribesmen at the Burg of the Thwaite that we call Legburthwaite to-day.

We leave the coach and pass beneath the hill towards the Thirlmere dam. Not only people, but water-floods have had law given to them since the 'Logsayer's' time. And we, leaving the mounded waters safe behind their mighty wall, cross the dam and turn for fifty yards to the right, to enter the zig-zag path that shall lead up the steep fell beside the Raven Crag.

None who pass up that path but must needs rest half-way to get the fairest view of the mighty

Helvellyn and Thirlmere at its feet lengthened out almost as Windermere lengthens out into river-form as seen from above Lowood. Loughrigg shines grey above the Raise Gap, and one has the feeling that another world is ours as we gaze to the valley's ending. We cannot help being struck by the woodiness of the knolls between the water and the bare Helvellyn. We have to thank Manchester for their careful preserving of this woodland, while the features of the western side of the valley are the emerald capes that jut into the water and the glorious castle bastions of the rocks Raven Crag and Fisher Crag that break the wall of the water-shed.[1]

We reach the top of the green fern-scented slope, and a world of wonder opens before us. Far as eye can see to the south the land is purple with heathery knolls, the gorgeous drapery of which, as it falls from them, breaks beneath the sunlight into every tone of the heather's purple gamut. We follow a sheep-track, for so knee-deep is the heather, that going is impossible unless we follow the sheep. The pollen rises as we move, and fills the air with scent of honey.

And now to the right, as we gaze northward,

[1] This was written before the Manchester Corporation had swept away all the wood from cape and island and cut down their one oak grove.

Blencathra and the gate into the hills or 'forest' between Blencathra and Lonscale Fell, shine purple blue that melts to emerald green, and all that 'unpathwayed plain' of Naddle, with its meadows vivid from a second spring, prinked out and embroidered by the wallings of the enclosures, forms a fair middle foreground for the glorious far-off Skiddaw group.

Right and left of us our vision is closed by slopes of such purple bloom that the purple seems to fill the air with rose. Ah, here if anywhere, on such a day, hope might be born and rosiest vision seem reality. Following the sheep track still, and avoiding the green marsh of rushes on our right, we make our way to the robbers' hold and the tribesmen's refuge.

It rises up, a kind of castle-rock or island from the midst of the field of bloom, and round it in semi-circle to the south lie the fosses so arranged that as we approach, the inner one is hidden by the outer, then comes a steep scarp, and we ask ourselves how we are to climb to that first plateau of the castle hold; but away by the rowan at the right, the sheep have gone before one, and having gained the top of the scarp we realise how large a number of men or of flocks might on this platform have huddled in safety.

The well is full of water from last night's rain; doubtless in the olden time it was more deeply hewn, but looking down into Shoulthwaite Ghyll it seems pretty clear that part of the use of the trenches and fosses that we crossed was to give shelter by their crescent walls to the men of the refuge camp as they took their goats to the ghyll or went for water.

A second scarp rises steeply above; again the sheep shall be our guide. We will follow by the rowan tree, the sole sentinel of the upper fortress rock, and gain the castle summit. There laid on the purple heather and gazing out to the north we may see the Druids' Circle stones shining in the sun on the Castrigg slope, and cannot wonder that men called the sun their god as they lay in the heather bloom three thousand years ago; or gazing across to the Watch Crags and the Castle Rock at the head of the Vale of St. John, we may grimly feel within us something of the lion heart of those old British warriors, who, in a time of storm and peril, shut themselves within this natural stronghold, and the very heather beneath us may for the moment turn the fell into a place of blood, and the cloud that darkens all the hill for the moment make us sad.

Such times as Gartnaidh the Norseman knew

when he held Thorstein captive here, come back upon us for the nonce, and deeds of violence such as Raineach saw ere she let herself down from this crag by sandal thongs and strips of knotted hide to fly for her life from the snoring giant, make the cloud sink into our hearts. Anyone who has a little imagination, and knows Collingwood's modern saga of 'Thorstein of the Mere,' would do well to bring his book here, and on this rocky platform of the fort of refuge live over again the stirring times of old, and dream of the Viking past.

But the sunlight shines again, and 'all the breath and the bloom of the year' are not 'in the bag of one bee,' but touch us and feed us and fill our souls with unimaginable delight, as leaping down from the Buck Castle scarps, and pressing through the heather-smoke, we return whence we came.

Yet we cannot as we make our way to the summit of Raven Crag resist the call to rest, and see how like an island in a purple sea the Refuge Fort lifts up against blue hills. We gain the Raven Crag; far off to the south-east, Bowfell and Scafell are grey against silver clouds, and nearer above the Armboth Fells one of the Langdale Pikes is purple dark. But the great view from Raven Crag is the view from the extreme

edge of the precipice that lets us gaze straight down into the Thirlmere water-flood. The great red dam, the white roads, the sparkling river, the quiet farms beneath their sycamores are basking in the August sunshine. Right opposite, beyond Great How, gleams the rosy house-front of Dale-head that Rossetti knew, where in the last autumn of his life he came for absolute retirement to the vale.

But there are poets in the vale who will be longer lived than Rossetti, and who make music for us in this all-golden afternoon. Full-hearted from the rains of yester-night the ghylls upon Helvellyn's side flash downward to the dale, and with the great murmur of a far-off sea the cataracts of Brotto, Stanah, and Fisher Ghylls are blowing 'their trumpets from the steep.' To that music Briton and Roman and Norse have lent an ear, from that sound have borrowed comfort, and ages hence the psalm of life they sing, and the tale of joy they tell, will help the wanderer and give health to the weary worker who scales the Raven Crag and thinks of the days gone by.

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A PILGRIMAGE TO IRTON CROSS.

One of the three great pre-Norman crosses of Cumberland, a red sandstone monolith 10 feet high that rises 7 inches out of a stone platform, stands in a churchyard so secluded at the base of the Irton Fells as to be seldom visited.

It is true that the tiny railway up the Eskdale valley to Boot passes within three miles of it, but the holiday makers bent upon climbing Scafell, or passing from Burnmoor to Wastwater, know nothing of the extreme beauty of the lower grounds between the Irt and the Mite, and are apparently oblivious of the fact that within easy distance of them stands a cross that may have been carven in the ninth century, and that certainly, next to Gosforth and the Bewcastle cross, is noblest in design and greatest in interest of any Christian monument in the county.

It may be said of the Irton cross that it is better known in London than in the Lake Country, for a

cast of it is in the South Kensington Museum. It is one thing, however, to see a cast in a museum and another to gaze upon the work of far-off ages still standing in its original position and fulfilling its original memorial design.

It was on one of those rare days of golden sunshine and glimmering haze at the end of September when I made a pilgrimage thither, and if there had been no Irton cross to delight in at the end of the pilgrimage, the journey taken would have been memorable for the glorious visions of the Lake Country and Cumberland seacoast. Passing swiftly along between Ambleside and Coniston, the Langdale Pikes, as seen beyond Park farm from the top of the ascent from Skelwith, had never seemed so beautiful. Thence descending into Yewdale, with its old-fashioned farms, its quaint yew trees, its glittering brook and noble crags beloved of Ruskin, we pass the churchyard where his ashes rest, and on along that undulating road so dear to him we go by the home of his later years, rejoicing to see still the charcoal burners build their beehive heaps for burning in the woods, and congratulating ourselves every yard of the way that the roads had been laid out in their sinuous loveliness before the motor car had come into use.

IRTON CROSS: WEST, SOUTH AND EAST SIDES

We were bent on reaching Broughton-in-Furness by way of Lowick and the Kirkby Ireleth Moor. Who that has seen it on such an autumn day can forget either the richness of the heathery waste between him and Coniston Old Man as he ascends to the Kirkby Ireleth quarries, or the prospect of the Duddon estuary with the shining sea that lies beyond Millom round the feet of Black Combe, or the broken ranges of the fells above the Duddon Valley and Ulpha, as he stops to look down upon what would seem to be all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.

From the height of the Ireleth moorland descending to Broughton and climbing the hill beyond, we dip to the Duddon bridge, not without memory of Wordsworth's sonnet, written in 1820, that begins

> 'I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide,
> As being passed away.'

Little did the poet think as he penned that sonnet, that as long as that stream glides the fountain of his pure verse will also pour forth help to all who

> 'as toward the silent tomb they go
> Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
> [Can] feel that they are greater than they know.'

Forward thence we went by that little-known but beautiful valley of Whicham, beloved by Faber the poet; thence under the mountain mass of that Druid-honoured hill, Black Combe, to Whitbeck. The white farms upon the fellside look out towards the sunny sea, and up above them, to the blue heaven, the slopes shine like beaten gold, for the bracken has changed colour, and the only sound that was heard through the still air was the cry of the shepherd and the sound of the sharpening of the scythe, where the sturdy dalesman upon the impracticable steep was reaping his bracken harvest.

Thence by Bootle with its modern granite market cross to tell us how in the fourteenth century this tiniest of market towns received a royal charter, we went towards Muncaster, not without memory of how the fells on our right hand still prove by their stone circles and many cairns that at one time this countryside was thickly populated with Neolithic man.

Diving down into the Esk Valley we ascend to the woody ridge, in the midst of which stands, round its Roman pele, the 'Castle of the Sand hills,' Meolcaster,—Muncaster to-day,—where from the thirteenth century the Penningtons have held watch and ward, and wherein still, since Henry

Sixth took refuge here in 1461, the enamelled and gilt glass-bowl, which is known as the 'Luck of Muncaster,' is preserved.

We had no time to do more than walk, by leave of the kindly lord, for a few moments upon that magnificent grassy terrace that runs for nearly half a mile beneath the woodland above the coiling Esk, no time to look at the remains of the old ninth century cross with its Norse carving of the whale vertebrae upon it, in the churchyard, or to go down to the famous remains of Walls Castle, which the Roman general built, when Agricola came this way, to guard the newly made coast road and the important harbour of Ravenglass, for Irton was four miles away to the north, and we had far to go before sundown.

Down the hill we went with fair view of the sand-dunes the nesting black-headed gulls know and love so well, and sharply turning to the right crossed the river Mite and went through pleasant fields between it and the river Irt, famous once for its pearl fishery, till by a solitary house in the valley plain, Irton Church was descried.

On the south side of the church—an uninteresting building—stood, with doubled interest by contrast, this venerable memorial relic which for more than a thousand years has weathered all storm.

In a wreathed circle in the centre of the cross head, four balls surround a larger central one. Thus the carver meant his handiwork to honour Christ and the Four Evangelists.

The hammer-shaped head of the cross and the interlacing knot-work on the east and west side, might have betokened that it was of Norse workmanship, but the panels on the east side reminded one of the cross at Bewcastle, and on the south side the tree of life with its spiral foliage, and on the north side with its abundant grapes, made one assured that this was the work of Anglian hands, who had learned their art of carving from Lombard workmen who had come from the land of the vine.

The intricacy of the knot-work on the west side took us back in thought to the Lindisfarne Gospels. Whoever wrought the carving, done with a chisel, not with pick or drill, was a consummate artist, for by varying the depth of the ground work he obtained great variety of light and shade, even as in the five panels of the east side and on the two panels of the west side he was determined to obtain equal variety of pattern. In the middle of the western side, a little more than half way down—for the artist was determined that the panels should not be equal—a small space

had been left plain for the incising of three lines of runes. These have now entirely disappeared, though when in 1863 a mould of the runes was made for Professor Stephens, he read two words, 'Gebidæth Foræ,' which he translated, 'Pray for. . . .'

It stands now silent and dumb and asks for no prayers, but none can gaze upon this ancient cross without thinking of it as a stone of help that seems to mock at time and outlast the centuries.

We left the cross and turned our faces homeward. Calling at Santon Bridge Post Office, we were assured that a passage over Birker Moor and Ulpha Fell to the Duddon Valley was possible for motor cars, but that to compass this passage over the wide moorland we must go to Dalegarth, and so by the Stanley Ghyll route over to Ulpha.

Few travellers know how picturesque the foothills are between Santon Bridge and Eskdale, but those who have paused at the top of the ridge above Santon Bridge and looked out westward will never forget the glory of Muncaster Fells or the beauty of that littoral plain and the shining sea beyond.

We were somewhat misled by a sturdy blacksmith at the forge near the King of Prussia publichouse, who assured us that motor cars generally

went over the moorland from that place. We saw no evidence of motor cars when we passed that way, and only by dint of constantly alighting and becoming motors ourselves were we able to climb the steep ascent of nearly three miles and gain the top of the ridge.

But it was well worth all effort. I know the Lake Country pretty well, but I know nothing so astonishing in its wonder of colour, its marvel of solitude, its mystery and other-worldliness, as that great red-brown moorland waste encircled by the blue hills from Scafell right round to Harter Fell and Coniston Old Man and Walney Scar, as seen towards sunset-time on a fine September evening. Except for two little lonely farmsteads white upon their patch of smooth green, like enamelled ouches set in burnished bronze, there was no evidence for the whole six-mile journey of human habitation. Gulls called ; they were the only voices, yet if this moorland could have spoken, it would have found many voices, for long-vanished races had here had their homes, and the man with his stone axe had here guarded his goats from wolf and bear, and gathered from Devoke-water, close by, such springtide dainties as the nesting gulls provided him with.

We descended by a corkscrew route that seemed

almost impossible for any chance of ascent, to the little hamlet Ulpha and the Traveller's Rest. There was no traveller's rest for us. The sun was setting, and though rosy clouds flamed above the hills, we knew that ere we reached Broughton, the stars would be upon us.

As we climbed the hill opposite Ulpha and breasted the fell towards Duddon Bridge, the white mists swam into being above Duddon Hill. Hest Fell and Black Combe were purple dark against the silver sky ; the lights in cottage windows, as, climbing over the hill, we dropped into Broughton, told us that eventide had come, and we hummed home towards Coniston on our way for Ambleside through narrow lanes whose tall upstanding hazel hedges, turned into lucent whiteness by the light from our motor-dragon's eyes, gave one a feeling that one was passing through miles of triumphal arch of silver leafage.

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A SPRING WALK UP SKIDDAW DODD.

Between Millbeck and Mirehouse, in the Crosthwaite Vale, there stands out from the mountain mass of Skiddaw the wooded outlier we call the Dodd. Our Norse forefathers gave it that name, and in their language it meant 'a limb.'

In the old days of beacon fires this limb of Skiddaw was probably of much more importance than it is to-day, for from the seaboard signals might be seen and sped from it to the further recesses of the southern hills.

But if it was known how fair a view could be obtained to the Scotch hills at the north-west, and as far as the Carrs and Wetherlam to the south, how Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite lie fully revealed to those who stand upon its summit, it would probably be much more resorted to than it is to-day.

It is quite true that the path that leads to it has never been completed, and that a climb of

two or three hundred feet up steep ground is necessary unless one approaches it from the northern or Mirehouse end; but those who want a three-hours' expedition from Keswick on any clear day are well justified in making the Dodd the object of their walk.

To-day is one of those spring days dropped from Heaven that we never forget; and, notwithstanding the wind blows coldly from the north, I know that on the southern slope of the Dodd we shall find such warmth as that we may almost believe ourselves in midsummer.

> 'It is the first mild day of March,
> Each minute sweeter than before';

and though no robin sings upon 'the larch beside my cottage door,' at least a thrush is trying over its love song in the holly, and I hear the cushat cooing from the limes.

Away we go from Vicarage Hill through the pleasant meadows towards Millbeck. The hedges that yesterday morning were dark brown and lifeless, have in twenty-four hours begun to change their colour; the myriad emerald points of the thorns have washed them into olive brown, for this year the spring has come into the valley a fortnight earlier than she is wont to do, and the daffodils are gold in the gardens, and the celandine

stars shine in the hedgerows. It is not the only thing that touches the hedgerows into gold to-day, for the yellow bunting, one of our first visitors to the valley, gleams and vanishes and gleams again.

Turning off the main road just before we get to Crookelty, we pass up the lane towards Skiddaw. Leaving Low Grove with its pleasant row of lime trees and its old mossy roof on our right hand, then passing through Nicholson's farm, we win the upper road of Underskiddaw at the hamlet of Millbeck. As we pass through that farmyard we cannot help contrasting its tidiness and the cheerfulness of its white-washed porch with the litter and discomfort that we often find in the farms of Wales and the Highlands. In no way does the Norseman seem more differentiated from the Celt than in his demands for order and tidiness in farmyard surroundings.

The stream that used to turn the mill-wheel, but turns it no more, for those who made saddle-cloths and horse-cloths for far and near, crosses under the road and sings away beneath the quaint ash tree that stands astride of it down by Millbeck Hall towards the vale, and before we go forward and climb the Dodd, it is quite worth while to turn aside to read the quaint inscription over the doorway of the farm, which was copied

from Blencow Hall, with some alteration, by Nicholson Williamson, in the year 1592. As we read the motto,

'QVORSUM
VIVERE MORI MORI VIVERE,'

which may be translated, 'Whither are you bound? Do you intend to live to die or to die to live,' we note that no arms are displayed, and therefore believe that, though the Williamsons were yeomen farmers hereabout in the second year of Edward VI., they were not notable as a family until there was born in this house, in the year 1633, a certain Joseph, the son of a clergyman who was Vicar of Great Broughton, who, growing up, became Secretary of State in the reign of Charles II., 1674 to 1678.

Sandford, writing of Millbeck Hall and Sir Joseph Williamson, says: 'And here a very ffair house of ancient gentle family of Willyamson, the birthplace of that most ingenious mons'ir Sir Joseph Williamson, now principal Secretary of State. A pregnant scholar: passed through his degrees at Queen's College, Oxford: when surrendered went over sea, got divers languages, and there came back into the King's service, and well beloved, for I never heard any great ill of him.'

We leave the farm, happy if we know the mistress of it well enough to pay a call to see its oaken interior; and passing along the road till beyond a cottage we come upon a seat upon the roadside waste, we climb the stile just beyond it, and follow a track in the meadow by gorse bushes, already gold with flower, that leads us to a larch woodland.

Thence up by a pleasant incline till we emerge at a stone stile in the wall upon the upland, where stands one of the most picturesque groupings of Scotch firs in the Lake District. They are not more than one hundred and twenty in number, but they stand apart with such interval as to enable their full beauty to be seen.

Just now the titmice were whispering to us in the woodland; now high above us a pair of ravens, engaged in love-making, bark at us hoarsely from blue sky. Our path leads upward past the Scotch firs towards the straggling larches on the height. Above the larches are darkly seen another straggling line of Scotch firs just where the shoulder of the Dodd is joined to the Skiddaw mass. That must be our aim, for if we win the wall at this hause or 'hals' or neck, between Skiddaw and the Dodd, and surmount it, we shall find an easy pathway that leads up in

zigzag to the Dodd summit, 1600 feet above sea level.

But do not let us hurry. The alders on our right are filled with golden catkins, the bracken burns in every shade of umber right on to the slope of Carlside, and the russet of the bracken is met by the flood of brown or bronze heather which streams from the height, while highest up of all, beyond the heather flow, may be seen the gleaming whiteness on Skiddaw Low Man of winter that defies the spring.

We have had this year very little snow upon our hills through January and February, but the March winds, blowing from the north bitterly as they blow to-day, have insisted that any rains that fall shall fall in snow upon the heights, and it looks as if some huge billow had suddenly foamed itself over the top of Skiddaw and left its foam in silver streaks frozen where it broke.

We are soon out of the wind, for the Dodd stretches its strong right arm between us and the north, and here in full sunshine we may lie and gaze down at the valley below and believe that summer days have already come. The light flashes upon the Derwent as it streams in middle vale, and here and there where a ploughman is busy turning the green field into patchwork of

purple brown, the strong sun flames upon the share at the furrow's ending and flashes to us its signal that winter is past and sowing time is hard by.

We struggle bravely up the steep breast, picking our way amongst the debris of the larch grove that has been lately cut down. A fox comes towards us, stops, pricks its ears, turns and trots off so leisurely that you might believe that he had no fear. He has probably heard the cry of the hounds too often upon Carsleddam and Carlside to care much for harm that man may do him. His bield is too strong a hold for terriers or men with a spade to trouble him. Very saucy and light-hearted are these Skiddaw foxes, for though every man's hand is against them, they are secure in their rocky fastnesses. I myself have seen a fox sitting high up on the Carrs while the hounds were chiming and the horn was blowing far below, and have watched him quietly make up his mind as to what he would do, and then trot off almost unconcerned up through the purple grey shales towards Skiddaw top.

Very silently and lonely are the slopes of Skiddaw to-day, and we are the only wanderers upon Dodd. But if we had been here on the first Monday after Christmas, we should have found all

Keswick on the Dodd and hounds in full cry as they raced across the breast of the fell, for on that day these Skiddaw slopes between Millbeck and Longside are dedicated by tradition to a Skiddaw hunt.

We mount the wall and take the well-defined pathway, more defined to-day by reason of the fact that the larches have been cut and dragged down the path to the valley, and so through what used to be a dense wood, but is now open fellside, we climb to the summit. It is an amazing view that one obtains from this vantage ground. Down below us lie the fields of Mirehouse where the lonely church of St. Bridget stands—Mirehouse itself, among its woods, beloved of Carlyle and Tennyson and Fitzgerald. Bassenthwaite, ebon dark beneath Wythop, shines still in silver gold along the eastern shore, that eastern shore marvellously looped and serrated, full of bays and headlands, and the eye led on from cape to cape, passes to the woods of Armathwaite, ascends the Caermote hill where the Romans from old Carlisle used to send their sick soldiers for health and strength and the open-air cure in the days of long ago.

Further northward we gaze and the whole of the Solway swims up into view. The white smoke of the iron furnaces at Workington and

Whitehaven make us feel almost ashamed that while others are working we are bent on holiday. Beyond the sea to the furthest south, we can dimly make out the coast of Whithorn, and as we gaze can remember that from that white monastery, Candide Casa, by the shore, the word of the Lord probably came first through Ninian and his teachers into Cumberland, while further to the north stands up the mass of Criffel, and further northward still the shore of Kirkcudbright that tells us how Cuthbert's body, carried across the sea from 'Derwentmuthe,' left its name for ever upon the land of its wandering.

Turning now to the south the whole of Derwentwater lies shaped like a silver urn in the valley. At the head of it, the Grange Fell, a memorial to all generations of our late King Edward VII., stands darkly up, and above it the bosses of Glaramara take the eye away past Great End and the Scafell group, but not before it has given us a peep of far-off Wetherlam and the Grey Friars beyond Bowfell, and let us gaze for a moment on the Ghimmer Crag of the Langdales and the ground of High White Stones between Greenop Ghyll and Grasmere.

To our left may be seen the ridge of High Street, with its echo of Roman days, and nearer the

whole of Helvellyn shrouded in snow is revealed, whilst out to the south-west Great Gable shines above Maiden Mawr and Honister peeps in the gap to the left of Hindscarth and Robinson. Red Pike is seen beyond the Grasmoor range, and our eyes are brought back to the extreme beauty of Whinlatter, Barf, and the wooded Wythop.

So bitterly blows the wind that we cannot linger. Swiftly we return to midsummer and rest beneath the Scotch firs far below us. Just now the sound of the sea was in our ears, the sighing and soughing of the wind in these firs ; now, out of the wind, the only sound that breaks the silence is the silver tinkling of waters on the fell as they pass downward to the valley.

Down into the valley we go, and hear the chiming of the children's voices as they come from the Scalebeck School and the patter of their wooden clogs as they race for home. We may take an hour's rest ere we pass back to Keswick if we wish to have full joy of the March afterglow, and then striking down to the main road by the Millbeck farms, but keeping along the upper road that Southey loved so well, we may watch the saffron light gather in the western sky and fill the gap above Whinlatter Pass with fiery gold.

It is fortunate for us in this Crosthwaite valley

that between us and the setting sun there should always rise the beautiful range of Wythop, Barf, and Grisedale, for no sooner does the sun sink behind these hills than they rise up in majestic height, and losing all detail of fell formation, become purple-grey silhouettes against the golden sky, whose solid substance seems to melt away into a kind of filmy semi-transparent drapery the folds of which are held by invisible hands in heaven—curtains to shroud from careless sight the last moments of the dying day.

Suddenly we may see the whole of the white shoulders of Helvellyn flush with rose ; the larches upon Latrigg burn into bronze and all the bracken upon Skiddaw's slopes seems for a moment molten fire. The glow fades, and though the light lingers so long as to forbid the stars, we know by the dark purple of the hedgerows that night is near. The last rook sails overhead, the first owl hoots from the copse, and thrush and blackbird, full of gratitude for this day's love and labour, sing in the dusk their evening hymn.

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THE HERMITAGE CHAPEL ON CARTMEL FELL.

THOSE who wish to see unspoiled Westmoreland in all its beauty should take a carriage from Grange or Kendal or Windermere and explore the Winster valley in May. Not a turn in the sinuous road but will give them some new scene of rural happiness and ancient farmhouse simplicity. Scarce a cottage or farm building but would appear to date from the spacious days of great Elizabeth. The old oaken cradle, meal kist, and the dog-gate at the foot of the stairs in some of them may still be seen ; the house place and the bower or best bedroom are in evidence still, while every porch with its whitewashed wall and its substantial stone-seat invites to rest, and to the cheery hospitality and quaint crack or talk of a people who for generations have known nothing more stirring than market day at Kendal, and who having a flitch of bacon on the rafter, and 'a gay lock o' meal in the

kist,' and a damson orchard in full bearing, are therewith content.

What damson orchards they are! and whether in the froth and flood of early Maytide bloom or in the dark jewelled splendour of late September's fruitage, it is worth a long pilgrimage to this very garden of the Lord to see them. Damson Saturday at Kendal is one thing; to see the fruit on the trees and the happy folk gathering their harvest is another. Of old time tons of the damsons went away to make a peculiar purple dye for the tanners; now, except in rare seasons of plenty, the fruit goes to the jam-makers.

To-day is a day of September's 'mellow mist and fruitfulness.' The first frost has not fallen on the harvest crop, and they are still thick and black upon the branches. The haze of Morecambe Bay infects the air with scent of the infinite sea. Butterflies flit from golden ragwort to tender harebell, and bees are busy on the larger Canterbury bells that tell us we are on limestone.

We cross the Winster at Bowland Bridge, and begin to ascend the lower skirts of Cartmel Fell. We are in St. Cuthbert's land, for the lands from hence to the sea 'with all the Britons therein,' were given to him by Ecgfrith the King in 685. It is possible that in one of his journeys to see his

new possession, he may have come over the Whitbarrow Scar that rises and shines so whitely across the Winster marshland.

But we are not going to his shrine, if Cartmel Priory may be said to be a child of Cuthbert's foundation. We are bent on seeing the shrine of an earlier saint, whose single chapel dedication still haunts the lonely recesses of Cartmel Fell. It is to St. Anthony's Chapel we are bound.

Ever since my visits to Egypt, I had been interested in the life and doings of St. Anthony, and dwelling in Crosthwaite, where in the fourteenth century a famous guild of St. Anthony had its habitation, I had felt what a debt was owed to these kindly men, sworn in to poverty, who spent their whole time in entertaining angels unawares, in lighting the packmen across the fords or 'waths' at eventide, in guiding wanderers over the fells and in ferrying people to and from the Friars Crag, whose name still keeps the brotherhood in mind, to the shrine of St. Cuthbert and St. Herbert upon the island in Derwentwater. It had therefore been my long cherished wish to visit the only church in the diocese that bears St. Anthony's name, the little chapel hermitage on Cartmel Fell.

It is true that Prior Gondibour in 1484 had taken care to have the history of this saint rudely

portrayed in seventeen pictures upon the oaken choir screen of Carlisle Cathedral; it is also true that at Kendal parish church there was a chapel to St. Anthony, but beside these memorials, the hermit of the wilderness had no record amongst men in the 'North Countree.'

It is probable that, except for four reasons, his name would never have been known in North Lonsdale, nor held in honour on Cartmel Fell. One of these reasons was that men in the fourteenth century hereabout burnt charcoal for the use of the Cartmel Priory. Another was that the woodcutters in the hazel woods here made 'swills,' as they are called, coracle-shaped baskets of interwoven wood, to sell at the market and to serve the Priory farms. A third reason was that hereabouts the swine-herds of the Priory watched their pigs in autumn rooting amongst the hazel thickets and fattening for the Priory store.

But the last and most important reason was that there was no road over Cartmel Fell for the monks and merchants as they journeyed northward or came south to that isolated Priory that lay hemmed in by tawny estuaries to east and west, by sea to the south, and by the marsh and hilly moorland of Cartmel Fell to the north. Who

would dare traverse such a pathless waste in troubled times without a guide, or who bring his pack-horse with its bells and baggage by way of the fell to the Priory, unless he knew, if belated or stayed by storm, he could find a kindly hermitage to give him help and welcome?

So sometime in the fourteenth century, the priors and monks of Cartmel bestirred themselves and determined to have upon this lonely moorland a refuge for the traveller and a house of prayer. They chose the spot well. High as it was, it was protected from the south-westerly gales by the rising ground that leads to Gummers How, and it would have fair vantage ground for outlook over the whole of Winster vale, eastward to the Scar of Whitbarrow and southward to the shining sand of Arnside and Grange. Yet itself, it would be hidden from view, and nothing astonishes the visitor more to-day than the way in which quite suddenly, as it would appear, whether he comes from the north or south, this Hermitage of St. Anthony in the Wilderness discloses itself to his sight.

Our carriage stops suddenly, and we are told to enter by the gate at the right hand, just beyond the ancient farmhouse of Burblethwaite, and shall find our way by the 'trod' to another farm, Pool

Garth, of like antiquity. Thence, passing on to the open fell, we see ahead of us the shattered ruins of wind-blown Scotch firs. Behind them appears a long, white barn-looking building, that seems as if it had sunk into the ground all its length. A large squat and square dove-cot at the western end, really the quaint tower of the chapel, is seen, and here we are at St. Anthony's shrine.

But where can the key be obtained? Distant voices of the children at their play tell us, for the little village school is on the other side of the church. The schoolmaster obligingly sends for the key to the vicarage, which is across a field on the upper fellside road, and whilst the key is coming we can examine the churchyard. The only object of interest in it appears to be the horsing-stone. Why from the centre of a horsing-stone there should upstand an iron drain pipe five feet high, is a mystery, till we realise that people who come to worship here on Sundays must often ride from far, and can throw the reins of their ponies over this iron pillar, and leave them safely standing outside whilst they enter the house for prayer.

We go back in thought to far-off days when from many of the farm manor-houses in the valley the pillioned nags came hither bearing

INTERIOR OF CARTMEL FELL CHAPEL

master and mistress on their backs. At the farmhouse of Hodge Hill, below us, one of these pillions is still to be seen.

Whilst we wait for the key, we feel the time is not wasted gazing over that beautiful Winster vale. In addition to Hodge Hill, we may make out the farmsteads of Comer, or Cowmire, Thorphensty with its memory of Norse occupation, and Pool Garth Halls that still echo with the life of the days of Queen Elizabeth. Burblethwaite lies away to the left. What a delightful sense of sound there is about that latter word, Burblethwaite! Running of brooks, lowing of cattle, singing of birds and humming of bees—all these seem to associate themselves with the very naming of the farmer's home.

The September mists have rolled away, and the Winster sparkles through the middle valley. The scars of Whitbarrow seen before through a delicate lilac veil, shine white as silver to the sun, and here and there a golden patch of harvest glows amid the general green aftermath of the vale.

What a vale of peace it is! It is almost as much removed from the world as it was in the early days of the Reformation, when the priest who officiated here was a certain John Brooke,

who, though 'an old malignant not reconciled,' was allowed, without removal from his incumbency, to say his mass prayers as of old.

But this valley has given birth to men in humble life who have helped the whole Lake District. At one of the houses we passed, near Bowland Bridge, there lived Barber, the famous clock-dresser, in the early part of last century, whose old grandfather-clocks are much sought after and looked upon as a great possession.

Further up the valley to the north, at Borderside, the farm lad William Pearson grew up to become the friend of Wordsworth, and one who, long before Wordsworth's poems were appreciated by the public, understood them and loved them. Of William Pearson it may truly be said that from Nature and her overflowing soul he had received so much that all his thoughts were steeped in feeling.

As we look down upon the Winster shining through the pleasant fields, we may remember that the beauty of his native vale so worked upon him that he felt obliged to give up his work as a Manchester bank clerk, and to return to work in the fields of the valley where he was born. Himself a poet, not only in soul but in words, this is what he wrote of this Winster river in the year 1821 :—

'And in the heavy time of after life,
When buried in the midst of toil and strife
In trading towns, if intermission sweet
I sought from my dull toil, my fancy fleet
Was straight amid thy vernal meads and flowers,
Thy hanging fields, wild woods, and leafy bowers.
Nor could I think of beauty on this earth,
But still 'twas seen with thee—as if thy birth
And mine had been together. Now at ease
And free to wander wheresoe'er I please,
What charms I find along thy simple stream,
Beloved Winster!'

The key has come, and we enter the quaint old-world chapelry. We are at once reminded of Haddon Hall and Greystoke churches, for the outstanding features of the little chapelry are the large square enclosures or pews, Comer Hall pew on the northern side and the Burblethwaite Hall pew on the southern side. Many of the intermediate uprights have disappeared, and at the first glance one is reminded of some gigantic four-poster beds of old time rather than of some sacred enclosures for private chapels that these interesting structures originally were.

Formerly these private chapels served for chapel and pew at once, and we have but to look at the remains of the beautiful carved work, and the little canopy and the cornice bearing its gilt trefoils and four shields, and to remember that

the five oak panels against the north wall inside the Comer Hall pew were once elaborately painted, and bore on each the figure of a saint with nimbus round the head, to realise what care and elaboration went to the original structure.

These pews are probably not in their original position. In the old time a rood-screen, perhaps, ran across just west of the priest's door, and these private chapel and pew enclosures were again probably just west of this rood-screen.

What that rood-screen bore upon it, we know, for at the vicarage may be seen to-day a very interesting figure of our Saviour, 2 ft. 6 in. high, which, though its arms are gone and though its feet have been burned off, for it was used for many years as a vestry poker, is still full of feeling and pathos, and originally hung upon the cross of the rood-beam of the chapel. The figure, probably of local work, represents the Saviour with face much emaciated, with a short beard and moustache, and forehead lined with care, and what may have been intended for a crown of thorns looks now, after this long time, as if it were the tonsure of the Middle Ages. A napkin that would seem to be almost of leather is cast about His loins, and the wound of the spear is not on the left but on the right hand of the body.

The Burblethwaite pew opposite the Comer Hall pew is of much later date, perhaps as late as the date of the pulpit, which is 1698. The two things that next strike us in the church, are the archaic three-decker and the miniature altar enclosure. I know no other place in the diocese where similar ones are to be found except in Mungrisedale Church. They are venerable relics of a day that has passed away, and it is a pleasure to note that the present vicar, who is reverently superintending the necessary repairs of the Church, will take care that these old landmarks of church-life are not destroyed.

But the most interesting part of the Church, is the east window filled with fragments of fourteenth century glass. This glass probably came from the church of the Cartmel Priory, when the present perpendicular windows of the choir and transepts there were inserted in place of the early English ones at a date not long anterior to the Reformation. We rejoice to think that the hands that enriched Bowness Church reserved some gift of colour for St. Anthony's Chapel.

The fact that among the heraldic fragments seen in the windows are the arms of the De Roos, who were Barons of Kendal from 1230 to 1390, goes to prove the antiquity of the window, for it is

possible that these fragments were here before the Cartmel Abbey glass was given. The glass has been put in in a very higgledy-piggledy, or, as we should say in Lake Country dialect, 'all ham-sam,' and in a very 'hitty-missy' way. It is believed to have been copied originally from a design by Jan van Eyck's celebrated pupil, who used to be spoken of as Roger of Bruges, but who is now known to have been Roger van der Weyden. The window as it originally stood in the Priory Church at Cartmel, was probably a window illustrating the seven sacraments. It is clear that there are in this window to-day fragments of five lights which illustrated the sacraments of Marriage, Holy Communion, Penance, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction.

The picture is so interesting as being the only bit of its kind existing in the diocese, that I think it well to transcribe the account of the glass as given us by Dr. Lees and the late Chancellor Ferguson in the second volume of *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian Society*:—

Light No. 1. The principal figure in this light is that of St. Anthony, whose tau-headed cross staff lies over his right arm, and has the bell, the mark of a hermit, hanging from it, while the pig, peculiar

to St. Anthony, is creeping up the staff. The face of the saint is very fine, and he is represented with long flowing beard and moustache; his right hand is raised as in benediction, and his left holds an open book; his robe, the cowl of which is drawn low down over the forehead, is bordered with gold, and the usual tau is on the robe. The whole is done in yellow and brown smeared on white glass.

The rest of this light is filled with fragments, evidently, from their scale, taken from a different window to that from which the figure of St. Anthony has come. Above the saint's head are fragments of broken canopy work. To the left of the saint, is a female figure in a ruby dress with a rosary hanging from her hands, which are raised in prayer—the beads of the rosary are white, with the larger ones yellow. A large gold buckle clasps a belt round the figure's waist, and the head-dress is white. This figure represents a Penitent, or Penance.

By St. Anthony's knee is the head of a priest in alb, with gold apparels, elevating the host, while above him is a figure of our Saviour which shows the *stigmata*, but has no cross, and the arms are bent upwards at the elbows. In this same light is more of this group; the priest's body in a ruby

chasuble and gold-apparelled alb is attended by a headless acolyte in a dalmatic, who holds up the hem of the chasuble; these two fragments then, when put together, give the Elevation of the Host, and the miraculous Mass of St. Gregory. The legend is, that on St. Gregory's prayer, in order to convince one who did not believe in the Real Presence, our Saviour descended upon the Altar, bearing the stigmata, and surrounded by the instruments of His Passion—illustrations of the same subject, taken from ancient MSS. will be found on p. 52 of Parker's *Calendar of the English Church*, and p. 225 of Lacroix, *Vie Militaire et Religieuse au Moyen Age*. Between the last-mentioned illumination and the glass we are now considering, there is a very marked resemblance.

In the lower part of this light (No. 1) is a death-bed scene—the figure of a girl in bed, on the side of whose head is placed a larger hand. Close to this, a half figure of a priest, in alb and crossed stole—Extreme Unction.

To the right of St. Anthony's feet are fragments of a book and a cushion. In the dexter lower corner of the light, a round-backed yellow chair; in the sinister, a lady kneeling with clasped hands, in a green dress, with kerchief round her head.

Light No. 2. At the top, fragments of canopy work, some inverted.

To the sinister, a bishop's head in the *mitra preciosa*, his pastoral staff is carried by a tonsured priest behind him, crook turned from the bishop.

Opposite the bishop's face a fragment, inverted, on which a surplice sleeve, maunch-shaped, with a slender hand projecting therefrom and holding a square golden box—probably belongs to the group —Extreme Unction.

Below these two fragments comes a large and perfect group of fourteen figures, representing a marriage—the costumes, some lay and some cleric, of time of fourteenth century. The bridegroom has long flaxen hair, a black velvet bodice, laced with gold; a priest in alb with gold apparels joins the hands of the happy couple; behind the priest is a monk holding a book. Behind the bride is an elderly man, probably her father, dressed in a dark-blue robe, trimmed with fur at the neck, and having an undergarment of cloth of gold.

In the lower part of this light we find the lower half of a figure, of the same scale as the St. Anthony in the first light—a large chain hangs from the figure, which is part of a figure of

St. Leonard—other portions of the dress and chain are in No. 5.

To the sinister of this fragment, we find another fragment of the Elevation group—we find an altar with white altar cloth and gold frontal; on it a chalice covered with a chalice pall, and also a gold monstrance. One of the usual five crosses with which the linen cloth would be marked, appears to the left of the chalice. A tabernacle veil of white, edged with gold, hangs behind the altar, and at its side are altar rails, next to which comes a credence table and piscina combined. Two cruets are on it, one on the margin of, and the other in the piscina, and the sacring bell is on the corner.

Below, fragments, some of the book and cushion in the first light.

Light No. 3. At top, fragments of canopy work.

A fine figure of our Saviour on the cross, wanting his arms and the arms of the cross, has the crown of thorns, a brown cloth round the loins, a square-headed nail in the feet; over the head the I.N.R.I. placed inside out, *i.e.* to the outside of the church. The crossed nimbus is about our Saviour's head. Below we find the feet of another crucified Saviour, another label, and several

heads, all, except our Saviour, on the scale of the Elevation, Marriage, etc., groups, and among them the head of a boy, on which a hand which seems to fit the mitred bishop in second light—Confirmation.

At the very bottom of this light—a row of windows, in front a dorsal, yellow with white rings. This belongs to the Elevation group.

In this light is a fragment of a coat of arms, which has been O, three water-bougets S.

Light No. 4. The principal figure is our Saviour, with pierced feet and the crown of thorns, but no cross; his feet are on conventional grass, and the figure must represent our Saviour as he appeared to Mary in the garden; the empty Calvary cross is seen at one side.

At the top, architectural fragments enclosing a circle, which contains fragments of two different monograms of I.H.S.; one in Old English, and the other in Roman capitals. There are also the figure of an angel, hands elevated, but not joined —the lower part of a surplice, with hand appearing through the sleeve—and a turbaned head with bifurcated beard.

At the bottom of the light is the head of John the Baptist, with the Agnus Dei on a book in his right hand, to which two fingers of his left hand

are pointing. Next him, the head of a queen, crowned, long hair, dress of cloth of gold, square cut at neck, possibly St. Margaret. Also two little bits of the Elevation group.

Light No. 5. Fine head of a bishop in the *mitra preciosa*, with sundry fragments below, among which a hand and portion of the chain, which is in the second light.

Below, head of another bishop in *mitra preciosa*, pastoral staff behind him. Also the head of a female.

The small bits of inscriptions which appear in various places are often inserted upside down, and the lettering to the outside of the church. They are fragments of 'Orate pro animabus,' etc., but give no names or dates.

How delighted the swill-makers and charcoal-burners must have been to see this gorgeous addition to their little chapel, and how gladly the swineherds must have knelt to feel the graciousness of their patron saint who held up his hands in blessing in the storied pane; how little must they have cared for King John's curse upon the hands that caused the loss of this stained glass to the Cartmel Priory. Let me explain what I refer to.

King John appears to have done nothing by halves, and so when as Earl of Morton he founded

the Priory of Cartmel in 1188, the Foundation Charter tells us that he expressed himself thus: 'This house have I founded for the increase of holy religion, giving and conceding to it every kind of liberty that the mouth can utter or the heart of man conceive, and whatsoever therefore shall cause loss or injury to the said house or its communities, may he incur the curse of God and of the blessed Virgin Mary and all the other saints of God besides my particular malediction.'

Before we turn our faces from the east window, let us remember that it is probable—as Mr. Micklethwaite of Westminster suggested—that originally there were two altars, one on either side the middle altar in this chapelry, and this may have accounted in part for the smallness of the middle altar.

There are other objects of interest which, through the kindness of the vicar, visitors to this little hermitage-chapel may be allowed sight of. The communion silver cup and cover is said to be unique as an ecclesiastical vessel. It has no hall-marks upon it, and for many years was in consequence believed to be of base metal. It is now thought to be a silver cup of the Elizabethan period. It is of goblet shape, and round the goblet is a finely engraved belt of ornament on

which are four parrots or popinjays in various attitudes amongst conventional foliage.

This is not the only treasure of the past for lovers of antiquity, for here is still preserved the pitch pipe of simplest construction, much worm-eaten, but still able to hoot a melancholy note that sounds like the cry of a distant wood-owl. I said simplest form of construction. The outside bottom pipe is moved at will up and down the inner one. The old clerk stopped his outside pipe at a certain point, which he had concluded by long use was the best keynote for the congregation, and then blew the whistle and led off the tune. In these days when the organ too often has it all its own way, it would not be a bad thing if the pitch pipe could again come in and our choirs could sometimes have the chance of singing the service unaccompanied.

Meanwhile it is with reverence we hold this ancient servant of hymn and psalmody in our hands, and feel it is peculiarly appropriate to the humble fellside chapel which still preserves it.

As we pass back from the vestry to the priest's door, our attention is attracted to a memorial slab near the Cowmire or Comer Hall pew, whose epitaph runs as follows :

'Underneath this stone A Mould'ring Virgin lies
Who was the pleasure once of Human Eyes
Her blaze of charms Virtue well approv'd
The gay admired, much the parents lov'd
Transitory life, death untimely came
Adiue, farewell, I only leave my name.'

It was well for those who mourned their three years' old child that no appeal to the Consistory Court for such memorials was necessary in those days. The chancellor would certainly have struck out the words 'Mould'ring Virgin' and adjourned the matter to his next court.

Out into the sunshine we go; gaze once more beneath the wind-blown Scotch firs upon the Winster vale, and determine to come hither again in the springtide of the year when the damson orchards are afroth with bloom, or when the thorns are white in the valley and the bluebells ring the chimes that only fairies hear, above the quiet graves.

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THE KING'S HOW IN BORROWDALE.

It is satisfactory to know that the most beautiful part of Borrowdale is now in the hands of the National Trust, and until that body is dissolved by Act of Parliament (for nothing else can dissolve it) it will remain safe for the enjoyment of the people, unharmed by the speculating builder and free from the restrictions which land preserved for sporting rights must necessarily involve.

Except for a single hour in the day, when the coaches that leave Keswick at 10 o'clock pass up to Seatoller, or when the unwieldy traction engine brings its huge wagons of slates down the valley from Honister, Borrowdale is a vale of rest, though each year the motor car encroaches on its tranquillity during the season.

There is something incongruous between the modernity of the motor car and the ancientry of Borrowdale. Hardly a farm-house in the valley but is still held by yeomen who can trace their

lineage and their time of residence for three hundred years. Though the Threlkelds of Grange came thither from Patterdale only one hundred and eighty-six years ago, the Wilsons of Watendlath have been in the dale more than three hundred years, and the Birketts can trace their property for at least four hundred years. The families of Fisher, Youdale, Jopson, and Braithwaite are of equal antiquity.

The Great Deed of Borrowdale, which came into existence in the year 1615, gives us a list of the freeholders of that date. Thirty-seven tenements were then enfranchised and bought free; most of the names exist and many of the families mentioned therein still hold their property.

A great deal of fun is made out of the story of the Borrowdale people, who, having heard the cuckoo or 'gowk,' determined to build a wall across the valley to prevent its escape; but those who poke fun at the Borrowdale people and would have you believe that they are simpletons, should come and do business with them, and they would find that while they are honest as the day, they are as wide-awake as any folk in Great Britain. An independent race of estatesmen, reserved in speech, refined in manner, they certainly impress

all visitors who come to stay at their farms with their alertness and their energy.

Their sturdy independence enables them, if they leave the country as emigrants, almost always to succeed in the new country. The first banker's clearing-house ever set on foot was the invention of one Birkett, a Borrowdale man, and the last representative of his family, Abraham Fisher of Seatoller, left behind him a name, which is still fresh in the minds of the neighbourhood, as a man of public spirit and deep religious influence.

From the time when Ketil, son of Orm, drank of the well near Lodore that still bears his name, and the Viking chieftains determined that the Bauta or Bowder Stone should be the defining mark of their two properties, up to Elizabeth's time, shepherding was probably the only occupation of the farmers, and very much those Norse shepherds, who were chiefly concerned with keeping their flocks safe from the claws of the eagle and the teeth of the fox and pine marten, would have been astonished to find that suddenly new industries arose in the Dale of the 'Borg' or Fortress, the Borgodal of their home and of their love, which we call Borrowdale to-day.

But when a portion of Borrowdale was given by the Derwentwaters to the Abbey of Furness, much

against the will of the monks of Fountains, who were then in possession of the rest of the valley, charcoal burners were hither sent who burnt charcoal for the Furness mines or bloomaries, and still on the hillsides above Stonethwaite the marks of these charcoal burners' huts can be seen. Salt-makers were also sent into the valley to evaporate the salt water that was pumped up from the salt wells near Manisty.

No other industries came into the vale till about Queen Elizabeth's reign, when it is probable that the German miners, in their search for copper, silver, and gold in the neighbourhood, discovered on the sides of Basebrown or Seatoller fell the 'pipes,' 'veins,' 'sops,' or 'bunches' of plumbago, called in this country 'Wadd' or 'black cawke.' These 'Wadd' mines were certainly being worked in the year 1622, for a certain John Lamplugh then sold his share of the 'Wadd' mines to the father of the Keswick benefactor Sir John Bankes.

Camden, speaking of this plumbago, calls it a mineral earth or hard shining stone, which painters use in drawing their lines, a mineral very scarce elsewhere to be met with. Robinson, in his *Natural History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, says: 'The most remarkable Mundic Vein upon these mountains, is that we call "Wad," or black

lead. Its composition is a black pinguid and shining earth impregnated with Lead and Antimony. This ore is more valuable than either Copper, Lead, or Iron. Its natural uses are both medicinal and mechanical. It is a present remedy for cholick, and other complaints, and for these and the like uses, it is much bought up by Apothecaries and Physicians, who understand more of its Medicinal uses than I am able to give account of.'

Hutchinson in his *Excursion to the Lakes* in the year 1783, tells us that when this mineral Wadd was first discovered, 'it was used by the people to mark their sheep, but that afterwards it was taken in powder for the cure of cholick and gravel,' and he mentions that 'a late discovery had been made of a large quantity of black lead, a mineral peculiar to this country and no where else found in Europe. It lies mixed amongst the gravel and earth on the shore of Vicar's Island. Whether it has lodged there by the floods or how otherwise been collected, is not known, but so valuable was the discovery thought that it occasioned an inquiry by what means the whole lake might be drained, conceiving that from this specimen immense wealth would be obtained by such an undertaking.'

However much we may honour the pencil-trade of Keswick, we cannot help congratulating posterity on the fact that bubble companies were not in the ascendant hereabout in 1783, and that the discoverers of plumbago on Vicar's Island did not proceed to drain Derwentwater.

A few specimens of this Borrowdale graphite are still to be seen at the Pencil Works and the pencil shops in the town. Lovers of Wordsworth who visit the famous yew trees—the Fraternal Four—may see the débris of the workings on the fellside near, but the mines have been for many years disused. At one time so valuable was their output that an Act of Parliament was passed to make the picking of 'wadd' or black cawke at the rubbish-heaps a felony. A guard-house was built over the entrance of the mine, and guards slept there with fire-arms, and when the ore was taken to London, half a dozen men armed with blunder-busses went with their precious load to guard it as far as Kendal.

But notwithstanding the notoriety that plumbago brought to them, the people of Borrowdale through the centuries had very little dealings with the other world. Their only way to Keswick was by the pack-horse road that led along the lake shore and branched up through the Great Wood

and over Castrigg-fell to Penrith, and it was not till Gray, the poet, in the year 1769 described the terrors of Borrowdale that the outside public became interested in the valley.

Those of us who go up to Borrowdale to-day, may note the very rocks fallen by the wayside, which were 'of so dreadful a bulk' and had fallen from cliffs 'so horribly impending' as to have made Gray the poet pass on in silence lest the agitation of the air by his speech should loosen the boulders to his undoing as he passed along.

Readers of his *Journal* will remember how he described Grange as 'surrounded by an awful amphitheatre of mountains,' of how he speaks of Seathwaite as a place 'where all farther access is barred to prying mortals'; where 'there is only a little path winding over the fells, for some weeks in the year passable to the dalesmen'; but, adds Gray, 'the mountains know well that these innocent people will not reveal the mysteries of their ancient kingdom, 'the reign of Chaos and Old Night'; only I learned that this dreadful road, divided again, leads one branch to Ravenglass, and the other to Hawkshead.'

Gray would be very much astonished to know that a motor road has been seriously proposed to

take the place of this little path winding over the fells, though in the best interests of all who love the solitudes of the Scafell group, the retirement of Wastdale Head and the peace of Borrowdale, it is hoped by all lovers of the Lake District that the road will never be an accomplished fact. Other changes have taken place in Borrowdale which we may deplore. The good old days there of 'haver bread,' which Gray the poet found in fashion that day he lunched at Grange, have ceased to be.

'For me,' says Gray, 'I went no farther than the farmer's (better than four miles from Keswick) at Grange; his mother and he brought us butter that Siserah would have jumped at, though not in a lordly dish, bowls of milk, thin oaten-cakes, and ale; and we had carried a cold tongue thither with us. Our farmer was himself the man that last year plundered the eagle's eyrie; all the dale are up in arms on such an occasion; for they lose abundance of lambs yearly, not to mention hares, partridges, grouse, etc. He was let down from the cliff in ropes to the shelf of the rock on which the nest was built, the people above shouting and hallooing to fright the old birds, which flew screaming around, but did not dare to attack him. He brought off the eaglet (for there is

rarely more than one) and an addle egg. The nest was roundish, and more than a yard over, made of twigs twisted together. Seldom a year passes but they take the brood of eggs, and sometimes they shoot one, sometimes the other parent; but the survivor has always found a mate (probably in Ireland) and they breed near the old place. By his description I learn that this species is the Erne, the vulture Albicilla of Linnaeus, in his last edition (but in yours Falco Albicilla), so consult him and Pennant about it.'

Long years after Gray wrote that note in his diary, the eagle rope was in existence, a joint possession which was used by the farmers in Langdale, in Wastdale, and in Borrowdale. But alas, the eagles are no more! and but for jealous watch on the part of some of us who are interested in bird life in the dales, the buzzard and the raven would also soon cease to exist.

One interesting wild creature still has his bield in Borrowdale. At times the 'sweet-marten' or pine-marten with his fine bushy tail, his beautiful white throat, and his delicate rounded ears, may be met with. But the shepherds look upon him as their worst enemy, and doubtless in lambing time he is a nuisance. I have heard of a pine-marten that attacked a full-grown 'herdwick' sheep, and

had so tightly fastened on to the neck of the creature that both were found dead at the bottom of a crag in Borrowdale, over which the sheep in its fear had sprung.

Truly the glamour of Borrowdale with its echoes of old Viking life at the Bauta Stone, of mediaeval charcoal-burners and salt-pan workers, of its Furness Abbey wool stores at Grange, of its German miners at the black cawke mines, has great attraction for lovers of the past, and he who seeks rest will surely find romance as well as rest in the valley.

I have heard it said that people whose nerves have broken down, and who are quite unable to obtain sleep, have found in Borrowdale sleep returns to them; and though its neighbourhood to the Scafell group, with a rainfall of 190 in. at the Stye, has given Borrowdale a baddish name for wet, there are, at any rate, months in the year, the months of March, April, September, and October, when one may be pretty sure of fine weather. But May is the month for the Borrowdale birches, and August is the month for the heather on Grange fell.

Come with me to-day; we will climb to the King's How on Grange fell and I will show you some of the beauty of the last possession of the National Trust. The 'bar' or 'helm' cloud is

white above Helvellyn and a strong east wind is blowing. The droughty roads are white as milk, but the hills all round the Crosthwaite valley are clad in purple and gold ; shadows dapple the fells, and the sunshine is glorious upon lake and mountain height.

There is no month like March for colour at the English Lakes. The heather, just beginning to feel the spring, is changing into brown-madder, which in sunshine, gleams of iris hue ; and the dead 'bent' upon the fells seen through the mist of the vaporous veil that is borne to us on the wings of the east wind from the factory smoke of Lancashire and Yorkshire, shimmers into gold. In no month of the year do we get such bluebell blue upon the western fells at eventide ; there is no time in the year that we get such translucent glory upon the eastern mountain tops. The reeds that fringe the lake stand up pure gold out of a cobalt-coloured waterflood. The larch trees have changed to lemon colour, the poplars are towers of gold, and, while the ash trees are white in the woods, the oaks have gone to tenderest delicatest grey.

We will walk through Portinscale and the Fawe Park woodland on by the copses of Lingholme to Brandelhow, thence through the Brandelhow woodland with its whispering titmice and its

scolding jays, to the open common beneath Catbels. We will dive again into the birch woods beyond the Brandelhow mines débris and skirt the lake to emerge upon the most picturesque bit of broken ground in the whole valley.

This broken ground lies at the southern end of the lake, and is made delightful for us as we approach it by the Scotch firs that crown a picturesque promontory. All about us the sweet gale beginning to be rose and gold with the touch of spring, breaks the monotony of the dead bracken, and the red brown heather. Outcrops of grey rock stand like islands in this flood of colour, and hence gazing southward, we get, what before was impossible, for no one had the right to wander here, the most magnificent view from middle vale to the far recesses of ancient Borrowdale.

The 'Borg' or Castle Rock of Borgodal, lifts up dark against the sunny heights of Glaramara, and Scafell, still winter white, towers above the blue of 'Great End.' The valley is closed on the right by the moss-agate like slopes of Maiden Mawr, and on the left is guarded by the rocky height which henceforth above this vale of peace will keep in mind the honoured name of Edward the Peacemaker, for it was the summit of that fell which Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise

purchased for the nation as a memorial of her brother, the late King. Sadly we think of our loss, and hence in ordinary lakeland weather one may hear Lodore making lamentation for his death, but the winds of March are dry or 'ask' as the natives call it, and all the water-brooks and ghylls are hushed to-day. We must come here in heavy rain if we wish to hear 'the roar that stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore.'

We go forward across the broken pasture in the direction of Manisty, for when the National Trust obtained this beautiful wander-ground at the south end of the lake, they were able to make arrangements with the owner of an occupation road from this rough ground, in order that the public should have leave to pass along it and join the main road to Grange just beyond the Manisty farm. Thence on to Grange and over the double bridges which have been saved for the next five centuries by the simple process of applying the grouting machine, and thus under the guidance of Mr. Francis Fox, the well-known engineer, have turned what before would soon have been a picturesque ruin, into solid monolithic arches capable of bearing any weight that passes over them. I say this notwithstanding the fact that the County Council Highway Authority has placed

notices at the end of the bridges to prevent heavy vehicles and traction engines passing over them.

And now we win the most beautiful part of the Borrowdale valley. From here to beyond the Bowder Stone till we enter the Rosthwaite meadows, the National Trust is guardian of all this loveliness of rocky ground and birch-embowered river and heather-crowned fell from the centre of the Derwent to half a mile back beyond the summit of the Grange fell in the direction of Watendlath. The sun is now westering, and pours through the shadow of Blea and Gate Crags a flood of light which falling upon the birch trees at our feet turns them into pure silver filigree or spun glass. Unimaginable in beauty and delicacy these shining harbingers of spring rise from the heathery waste and tell us that the time of leafage is near.

The white-throat, our first spring visitor, flits from rock to rock with his harsh 'chack! chack!' and at the same moment a Bessy Dooker or water ouzel curtsies and shows his silver star against the mossy shadow of the Derwent bank.

We had left the road for the river near a little fountain with an inscription from Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner,' that keeps in mind a promising young artist, not without thanks to the Trust

which will make it impossible for a Borrowdale bungalow ever to be built here. Then, by heathery knolls and grey rocks that gave contrast to the golden gorse blossom, on along the road past the quarry caverns to the Bowder Stone we went, that Bowder Stone, which Wordsworth described as

> 'A mass of rock, resembling as it lay,
> A stranded ship with keel up-turn'd—that rests
> Fearless of winds and waves.'

The old *Guide* writers had a very exaggerated opinion of the size of this rock. They spoke of it as the largest self stone in England ; assured their readers that it contained 2300 solid feet of stone and weighed 1971 tons. They described it as being as large as a full-sized battleship. I wonder what they would say if they could see the 'Thunderer' beside it to-day.

It is not its mass that interests us. It is the fact that having fallen it has come to equilibrium self-poised on one of its edges as it were, and the people who now shake hands through the aperture beneath the edge may believe that at one time or other this vast block fallen from the cliffs above in some earthquake, was thought of as poised by some mysterious power, and was looked upon as the shrine of some divinity.

Its likeness to a ship's keel may have struck those Norse wanderers from over the foam, who, when they settled here so many centuries ago, determined that this stone ship should be the Bauta or Border Stone between their chieftains' properties.

Within ten minutes of this Bauta Stone, we may reach by a track the sheep have made in the heather, a rocky eminence northward of us known locally as Little Scafell, from which one of the finest views can be obtained of the special glory of Borrowdale beauty—the river that flows from Glaramara's inmost caves, now blue, now green, as it passes over the blue-green pebbles—the rocky 'Borg' or Castle Crag—the splendid Gate and Blea Crag heights beyond, and at our feet the heathery undulations of broken ground that lead away toward the ascent of Grange fell. To reach the view point we needs must pass boulders in picturesque confusion on the right hand, and having passed them turn to get the best view of the Bowder Stone as seen against the marvellous background of the Rosthwaite valley.

From the summit we will follow the track that sheep or shepherds' feet or quarrymen have worn, and skirting the Grange fell northward and eastward, we pass through a gap in the wall and so

begin the ascent through birch trees and gnarled thorns with here an alder and there a rowan, along the scarcely distinguishable path by which in old days men brought their peat-sledges down from the height, and by which in modern days shepherds seek their flocks. The path is easier seen to-day in March than in mid-summer, for the bracken fern is dead to-day upon the ground.

We clamber up and up, constantly stopping to gaze upon the glory of Derwentwater as seen down the vista of Troutdale with Skiddaw and Bassenthwaite beyond. In summer time we are often impelled to rest and gaze upon this view by the heathery couches upon the rocky knolls that bid us rest, but to-day we push on with the sound of water in our ears, from the ghyll that passes downward into Troutdale, marvelling at the beauty of the shales on Gowder Crag and the loveliness of the birch trees that fledge the precipices.

Turning now to the right away from the ghyll, and passing at the back of an up-standing crag, we cross the hollow, springy to the foot with 'sphagnum moss,' and reach what in old days was a tarn, thence we begin the last ascent and climb by boulders, that have been smoothed by the icefloe into roundness, by heather patches and patches of

THE BORROWDALE BIRCHES

dead fern till we emerge upon the crest of the King's Fell, 1363 feet above the sea.

I know no view in the English Lake country at this season of the year that seems to be able at one moment to speak so certainly to the heart of death and of life. Away to the eastward, the slopes and hollows of the fells are bare almost as the rocks of Sinai or the upper hills of Palestine. This barren solitude to-day lies grassless and treeless, coloured in patches of puce and gold by bent and heather, but giving us just the sense of drought and lifelessness that one found in wandering upon the heights of Edom. Whilst if we turn our faces from the east to the north or to the south, though as yet the springtide has not fully come, the valley smiles with pasture and lake and wooded comfort and the happy home-steadings of man.

As for the view, though westward it is enclosed by the precipices of Maiden Mawr and Scawdale, southward the eye sees beyond Green Gable and Great Gable, Scafell and Scafell Pike, and the towering mass of Great End. Beyond Eskdale Hause, Bowfell is dimly seen, and to the left of Glaramara, the Ghimmer Pike of the Langdales, and the eye going round westward ascends by High White Stones and drops to the great ridge of

Helvellyn that lies to-day robed in cloth of gold laced with ermine, for the snows have dappled the tawny garment of its bents, and that tawny garment gleams golden through the sunny March air. Very well did the old Norse invaders speak of it as 'Gyallar-Melen,' the yellow moorland, in the times of long ago.

And here at the How of the King, I cannot help remembering how I saw him, whom a grateful nation mourns, robed nine years ago in the gold and ermine of his coronation robe.

But the view that abides the longest with us is the view to the north, of Derwentwater and Skiddaw beyond, and those who know Wordsworth's Sonnets will be glad to remember as they gaze from this point with what pride he compared his native hill that

> 'shrouds
> His double front among Atlantic clouds,'

with Pelion and Ossa, and the far-famed poet hill of Greece.

There is no view, in my judgment, of Derwentwater comparable to the view of it as obtained from this point, and if the nation had obtained by the gift of the Princess only the thirteen acres of this noble height with access thereto, instead of possessing as they do 320 acres of fell and valley, they

might think the efforts to obtain it were well worth making.

Nor will this noble fell alone keep in mind King Edward VII. The honoured name of Lawson, whose ancestors were Lords of the Manor of Borrowdale, and others who were lovers of this glorious vale, are here enshrined. Not the least interesting fact connected with this gift to the nation is that amongst many donors of an acre are found several of our great public schools whose staff and whose scholars have realised the worth of preserving to far-off generations its beauty and its peace.

We have been nearly an hour in making the ascent: we shall drop down in less than half an hour, and, joining the milk-white road again, may pass back to Keswick with visions of peaceful Borrowdale to help us in hours of stress and labour for many days to come.

But let us not return the same way. Rather let us drop down southward, till, through a sheep gate in the wall, we enter the lower fellside pasture below, and make our way towards an ancient yew-tree that stands mid-way upon the height. From that yew-tree it is well worth our while to go for a look out from the grassy crag that is known, in contradistinction to the lesser crag beside the quarry, as 'Great Scafell.'

If from the King's How above we obtain the best view of Derwentwater, from this 'Great Scafell,' as it is locally called, we certainly see the Rosthwaite valley to the best advantage. The Derwent streams through the meadows, reinforced at Stonethwaite by the Langstrath Beck and the Greenup Ghyll. Eastward and south the eye passes along the Brund to the great Eagle Crag which stands dark against 'High White Stones,' and as we look upon it we may remember that the last eagles in Borrowdale nested there. Bringing the eye round to the west we cannot help noting the beauty of the wooded tongue that runs into mid-valley at Rosthwaite, and gaze with delight upon that fortress hill in the immediate foreground, which once, so antiquarians say, the Roman sentry may have held.

Above Blea Crags, on the skyline, is seen Minna How. Below it, and above the farm of The Hollers, stream down the silver shales of Knitting How. The old guide at the Bowder Stone will tell you that it got its name from the fact that 'in the days when women-bodies hereabout kenned hoo to knit, and they dooan't knit nooadays,' it was the habit of an ancient Borrowdale lady to climb up that crag with her knitting and sit in the sun, 'til ya daay she tumbled doon and brekked neck on her.'

We wander down towards the shining stream, the pebbles on whose banks gleam silver white in this dry time of March, and we can hardly from this dwindled stream to-day, conjure back its fury and its wrath when the rains have fallen heavily and the whole vale is just a sea of water.

We can rejoin the road before it enters the Rosthwaite meadow lands, and so back by the Bowder Stone home, not without many a pause to gaze upon a scene so fair as that quiet vale of peacefulness walled round by the ancient home, as Gray would put it, of Chaos and Old Night.

And how did this beauty spot of Borrowdale become a national possession? The story is as follows:—Just before the Barrow Estate came unexpectedly into the market, the question of the right of free navigation on Derwentwater had been raised, and the National Trust, as riparian owners of Brandelhow, had been in communication with the Lords of the Manors on the subject. It was seen to be a most important thing that this question of a right-of-way for boats on the lake should be settled once for all.

As soon, therefore, as it was known that that part of the Barrow Estate which was in the market contained valuable water rights as being part of the freehold of Borrowdale held under the Great Deed,

it was thought that great efforts should be made to secure it for the National Trust, and this the more because friends of the National Trust had already secured the adjacent woodland of Manesty, and it was seen that if this Barrow land with its picturesque bays and promontories at the southern end of the lake could be obtained, it would virtually give right of way to the public as far as the river on the east, and by arrangement with an adjacent landowner, a right of way from the shore to the Borrowdale road beyond the Manesty farm.

At the same time it was seen that the Barrow Estate which was for sale contained Grange Fell, the Borrowdale Birches, the Bowder Stone, and all the land east of the river between Grange Bridge and the Rosthwaite meadows. The heart, in fact, of the most beautiful part of Borrowdale.

The matter was brought to the notice of the National Trust, but having just appealed for a very large sum of money to obtain Gowbarrow, it was impossible for them to ask for subscriptions for a new possession in the English Lake District. The only possibility of obtaining it lay in the chance of some private individuals purchasing it and holding it for five years, with an option for the National Trust. Two local gentlemen, members of the National Trust Council, knowing the importance

of the purchase to the nation, and that it was the chance of a life-time to obtain it, determined to advance the money and give the National Trust this option.

They therefore approached the vendors and asked if they would sell the south shore of the lake, and the adjacent rough ground and the land in Borrowdale, comprising the Grange Fell and the Bowder Stone, the latter being an estate of 310 acres of freehold, together with the Bowder Stone, the adjacent cottage, 46 shares in the Wheyfoot Quarry, and a mile of the foreshore and bank of the River Derwent.

The vendors were unable to meet them. They said that they were willing to sell only on condition that an adjacent farm, of which this estate was part, the farm of Riggside, Grange, should also be purchased. These gentlemen had neither any wish to become land-owners nor were they anxious to find the larger sum for this purchase. But they had no option in the matter, and they therefore determined to effect the purchase of the whole estate. The matter was eventually settled by telegram, and how near a thing it was may be seen from the fact that they learned afterwards that within half an hour of the purchase others were willing to make higher offers for the same properties.

The question then arose as to what should happen in case the National Trust failed to secure it at the end of five years. It was decided by these gentlemen that the property must be divided. It chanced that the rentals from the farm and the rentals from the fell in Borrowdale were almost equal; but an independent valuer was called in who fixed the prices of each property according to its rental, and these figures were laid before the National Trust.

Inasmuch as the purchasers had had to borrow money to effect the purchase, or to sell out stock at a reduction, the National Trust were willing to guarantee interest at four per cent. on the money expended for such part as they should purchase at these fixed prices, and the purchasers of the property were willing to agree that all rental received during the five years from those parts of the property purchased should be returned to the National Trust in order to enable them to pay this four per cent.

On these terms the National Trust eventually became purchasers of all they desired and all that suited their purpose, at a proportional price of the original purchase money; the farm itself to remain on the hands of one or other of the original purchasers.

It is interesting to note that, notwithstanding the *bona-fides* of the purchasers, rumour at once put it about that they had purchased a farm in Borrowdale at a comparatively small sum and sold all the worthless parts of it at an exorbitant sum to the National Trust. It is not very encouraging to public endeavour, but the story is worth telling, if only, in spite of any such discouragement and disparagement, it will lead others who believe in the mission of the National Trust, when a beauty-spot falls into the market, to consult the National Trust as to whether, if a purchase is made, the Trust will at some future time make efforts to take it over, at the price paid, for the public good.

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